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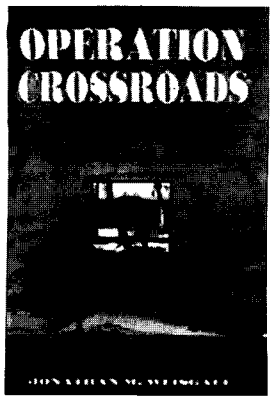

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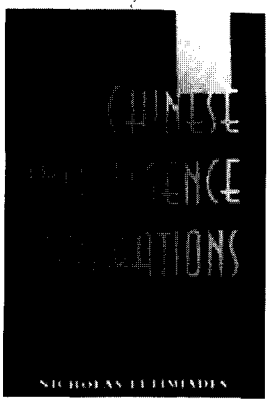

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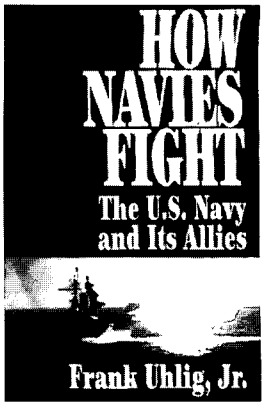

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Ready, Fire, Aim

Clinton's Left-Footed Foreign Policy

Adam Meyerson

In the space of only 18 months, President Bill Clinton has squandered three precious assets in American foreign and defense policy that were bequeathed to him by Ronald Reagan and George Bush.

He has destroyed the credibility of the United States before friend and foe. He has shattered the morale of the U.S. armed services. And despite his Reaganesque eloquence on this subject as a presidential candidate, he has seriously damaged America's moral leadership on behalf of freedom around the world.

Call His Bluff

The damage to America's credibility is already enormous, and will be difficult to repair. When President Bush drew a line in the sand and said Iraqi aggression would not stand, the world knew he meant it. Without that certainty, he would not have been able to rally behind him the public opinion of the American people or to forge his extraordinary worldwide alliance against Saddam Hussein.

So, too, when Ronald Reagan said the United States would proceed with cruise missile and Pershing II deployments in Western Europe in the mid-1980s, the world knew he would stand up to the Soviet intimidation campaign designed to stop them. Reagan won the support not only of British, French, German, and Dutch governments—more important, he won the support of their voters—and the Soviet strategy of splitting Europe from America was defeated. The willingness to carry through on commitments won respect for the United States even when approval was initially lacking. The liberation of Grenada in 1983, the bombing of Libya in 1986, measures such as these sent a strong signal to aggressors and would-be enemies: there were certain things the United States would not tolerate, and woe to those who tried them.

This credibility has now disappeared. Neither allies nor potential enemies have any confidence that Bill Clinton means anything he says as commander-in-chief of the United States. One day he's ready to bomb the Serbs, the next day he's reconsidered. One day he's sending troops to Haiti, the next day he's pulled them back. One day he says we cannot tolerate a North Korean nuclear bomb, the next day his advisers say he misspoke. One month he lays down the gauntlet to China, threatening to cut off trade in the absence of human rights improvements. A few months later, when China calls his bluff, he says that really wasn't a good idea.

This is the most serious character problem of the Clinton presidency, and it is the principal source of the deep misgivings European and Asian leaders harbor toward the new president. Admitting mistakes can be admirable, up to a point, but the United States cannot afford the luxury of a commander-in-chief who fires before he aims. To begin with, allies will refuse to take unpopular or difficult actions at America's request if they fear that Washington will pull the rug out from under them by changing its own position. Hence the paradox: for all Clinton's talk of multilateralism, Reagan and Bush did a better job winning the support of allies.

Reckless Confrontation

More dangerous than the effect on allies is the effect on potential enemies. Why should China, after Clinton's flip-flop on Most-Favored Nation status, pay any attention to any demand or request from the United States? How does Kim Il-Sung of North Korea know what the United States will not tolerate when that standard is always changing? In his approach to potential adversaries, President Clinton alternates between appeasement (postponing joint exercises with South Korea as a goodwill gesture to Kim Il-Sung) and reckless confrontation (going after Aideed in Somalia; threatening intervention in Bosnia). This is a lethal combination that risks involving the United States in wars we don't want to enter.

The danger of reckless confrontation is that conflict will escalate and the United States will either have to withdraw after being bloodied (Somalia, Haiti) or get dragged into a war we otherwise would have avoided. This happened in 1963 when John F. Kennedy's reckless encouragement of the coup against Ngo Dinh Diem in 1963 forced the United States into much deeper involvement in Vietnam. Appeasement, too, is an invitation to war. The danger is that a potential enemy will miscalculate by underestimating the willingness of the United States to stand for its principles and interests. We then respond,

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but too late to do so peacefully.

The demoralization of the armed services under Clinton will likewise be difficult to repair. The spirit of a fighting force is as critical as its size and equipment, and in the Reagan-Bush years American soldiers, sailors, and airmen were mentally and emotionally ready to fight and win. High morale came in part from rising military budgets that raised pay and gave U.S. troops the tools, spare parts, and training they needed to do their job. But the budget peaked in 1986. Morale remained high because there was confidence in the ranks that they were commanded by presidents who understood the military, who knew that force must be used only rarely and with the utmost caution, but with such overwhelming power that victory can be achieved quickly and decisively.

During the Gulf War Bush gave U.S. troops and their allies clear instructions and the political support and firepower they needed to overwhelm Saddam Hussein with a minimum of casualties. Reagan understood force so thoroughly he seldom had to use it to achieve his international objectives. As Margaret Thatcher put it, "Reagan won the Cold War without firing a shot."

President Clinton, by contrast, has jeopardized the lives of U.S. troops by putting them in harm's way without clear objectives. He has given away American sovereignty and abdicated his own responsibilities as commander-in-chief by putting American men under the command of United Nations bureaucrats. He has threatened military readiness by suggesting that open homosexuality is compatible with the unit cohesion required by combat. He has talked too cavalierly about the use of force, showing he doesn't understand what it takes to fight and win a war. He has aggravated budget cuts in defense by spending precious defense dollars on breast cancer research and industrial policy experiments, and by keeping open obsolete military bases.

All this has seriously damaged morale in the services, and contributed to a crisis in civil-military relations. We now see the horrifying spectacle of uniformed troops openly laughing at their commander-in-chief. If this continues, we will see the erosion of one of the most important pillars of our democratic tradition, civilian control of the military.

Serious Mistakes

Perhaps most surprising has been the administration's abdication of leadership on behalf of freedom around the world. Clinton spoke eloquently on this subject as a presidential candidate, and was properly critical of President Bush's failure to set out a vision for the democratic transformation of countries like China. And yet the new president has made two serious mistakes that have undermined his moral authority.

The first is his embrace of Haiti's Jean-Bertrand Aristide, a demagogue who publicly calls for mob killings of his political opponents. Aristide is a democrat in the sense Hitler was a democrat: he was elected by popular vote. But democracy is about much more than elections: It is about freedom of expression and association, free enterprise and free trade unions, an independent judiciary, the rule of law. Aristide is no more committed to the building of these democratic institutions in Haiti than the military kleptocrats currently in charge. For Clinton to make Aristide the symbol of his commitment to democracy in foreign policy is an obscene joke.

The second terrible mistake was Clinton's threat to cut off trade with China if it didn't make substantial human rights improvements within a year. Two errors were involved here: making a threat without first having thought through the costs to America of carrying it out, and focusing too much on the short-term rather than the long-term building of democratic institutions in China. Clinton was forced to beat a hasty retreat from his threat as soon as he realized its costs to the American economy, as well as to other American interests in Asia. But his retreat had serious costs as well; he jeopardized the lives of Chinese dissidents, who came out into the open assuming Clinton would honor his commitment, and he lost his further leverage with China on the issue.

It would have made much more sense to follow Ronald Reagan's aggressive public diplomacy strategy toward China, which encouraged extensive commerce and student exchanges while putting Chinese leaders on the political and ideological defensive. Reagan's strategy, which contributed to the Tiananmen demonstrations of 1989, focused on building China's long-term conditions for democratic institutions, including an independent market economy. Reagan gave some of the most important speeches to students in China, and was an enormous inspiration to the movement for freedom and democracy there. But he never insisted on instant results, which he knew would not be attainable. His strategy was to build a free China in the future. Clinton needs to learn that patience can lead to faster reform.

Dangerous Statesmanship

The failures of the Clinton foreign policy are not simply the result of inexperience or inattention or ineptitude. They are the result of bad ideas. President Clinton has gotten in trouble by listening to the liberal-left wing of the Democratic party—the people who opposed the Reagan military buildup, the people who thought economic sanctions were the way to defeat Saddam Hussein's aggression, the people who laughed at Ronald Reagan for calling the Soviet Union an evil empire.

It is the congressional left, and especially the Congressional Black Caucus, that is pushing Clinton into his embrace of Aristide—and perhaps even an invasion of Haiti. It was the congressional left that pushed him into his disastrous MFN threat to China. It was the congressional left, and its think-tank allies, who encouraged putting U.S. soldiers under United Nations command. In most of Clinton's flip-flops, the president has been mugged by reality after initially following the advice of his party's left wing.

Conversely, in the case of Bosnia, Clinton got in trouble by trying to look muscular—and thus proving he wasn't a captive of the left. But whether trying to appeal to the left or to distance himself, Clinton gives the impression that his foreign policy choices are based on domestic political calculations, not on what's best for protecting America. His ship is without a compass, bending to whichever wind blows each day. This is dangerous statesmanship and, in the long haul, it's also bad politics. ☎

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The Saddamization of Iran

Is Tehran Our Next Big Enemy?

James A. Phillips

Fifteen years after its Islamic revolution triggered a wave of anti-American violence, Iran has emerged as the chief threat to American security interests in the Middle East. Iran is following a path not unlike that of its long-time archrival, Iraq: Fueled by its oil wealth and financed by billions of dollars in foreign loans, Iran seeks to become the dominant military power in the Persian Gulf. It is actively exporting terrorism, undertaking a massive military buildup, and scrambling to develop biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons.

Iraq's defeat in the 1991 Gulf War has helped set the stage for Iran's drive for hegemony over the Persian Gulf region, the strategic storehouse of two-thirds of the world's oil supplies. Iran also is well positioned to exploit the Soviet Union's disintegration, the collapse of Arab socialism, and the rising tide of radical Muslim fundamentalism. Indeed, Iran is escalating its financial, political, and military support for radical Islamic movements throughout the Middle East and Southwest Asia.

In the short run, Iran poses more of an ideological, subversive, and terrorist threat than a military threat to America and its Middle Eastern allies. In the long run, however, Iran's military buildup—particularly its development programs for nuclear, chemical, biological, and missile weaponry—will pose an increasingly grave challenge to the security of American forces and allies in the region.

The Great Satan

As in the early stages with Iraq, the Western response to this threat so far has been lukewarm. The Europeans in particular are again misreading the dynamics of Islamic revolutionary politics. By maintaining an economic lifeline to Tehran—such as offering international credits and loans—the Europeans claim to be strengthening Iranian "moderates." But in Iran the difference between "moderate" and "radical" political leaders is a tactical matter, not a strategic one. Indeed, it is the "moderates" who are most keen to develop Iran's conventional and nuclear arsenal.

Since the 1979 Iranian revolution, Tehran has seen itself as the leader of the Muslim world. The United States, which the late Ayatollah Khomeini referred to as the "Great Satan," is hated for its support of the Iranian regime of Shah Reza Pahlavi, for its support of Israel, which Iranian radicals seek to destroy, and for its support of moderate Arab regimes such as those in Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

But regardless of its policies, America is hated for its values and the powerful influence of its culture, which Iranian revolutionaries believe seduces Muslims and undermines Islam. Khomeini denounced moderate Arab regimes as "Westoxicated" practitioners of "American Islam." This ideological motivation explains why Iranian-supported terrorists in Lebanon in the 1980s attacked targets affiliated with the American University of Beirut and Christian churches, in addition to the United States Marines.

Tehran has enjoyed only limited success in fomenting revolution, in part because Iran's Shiite brand of Islam is shared by only about 15 percent of all Muslims. The Sunni (orthodox) Muslims, who make up more than 80 percent of the Islamic world, tend to be more respectful of state authority and distrustful of Shiite radicals.

Iran's greatest success has come in war-torn Lebanon, where it helped to create, finance, arm, and train the radical Shiite Hezbollah (Party of God) movement. Several hundred Iranian Revolutionary Guards, the militant shock troops of the Iranian revolution, work closely in support of Hezbollah in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley. Tehran also supports less powerful Shiite radical groups in Iraq and Afghanistan. But Shiite revolutionaries have seized power nowhere outside Iran. In fact, Shiite rebellions have been crushed in Iraq (1991) and Saudi Arabia (1979), and an Iranian-backed coup attempt was quashed in Bahrain in 1981.

Exporting Revolution

Iranian-supported Islamic revolutions, however, now have much better prospects for success. The dissolution of the Soviet Union not only has opened up Central Asia to Iranian influence, but has deprived secular Arab nationalist regimes—such as those in Algeria, Iraq, Libya, and Syria—of a source of political, military, and economic support. At the same time, the failure of Arab socialism

James A. Phillips *is the senior policy analyst for Middle Eastern Affairs at The Heritage Foundation.*

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Reuters/Bettmann

Iranian president Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani is rapidly expanding his nation's military strength, and has embarked on a massive weapons buildup.

in such countries as Algeria, Egypt, and Tunisia has left them with feeble economies unable to absorb the huge number of youths entering the labor market.

Faced with a bleak economic future, young Arabs are turning to radical Islamic movements to find hope and meaning in their lives. Some Arab revolutionaries, radicalized by the Islamic *jihad* or holy war against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, have returned home to spearhead anti-government violence in their own countries. These Iranian-backed Muslim radicals are eager and able to exploit the hopes and frustrations of a generation of young people. For every question they respond with a simple slogan: "Islam is the solution."

Iran has established good working relations with several Sunni revolutionary groups since 1990, including Hamas (the Palestinian Islamic Resistance Movement), Islamic Jihad for the Liberation of Palestine, the Islamic Group of Egypt, and similar groups in Algeria, Jordan, and Tunisia. The opening of Arab-Israeli peace talks at the Madrid Conference in October 1991 gave Iran and Palestinian radicals a common interest in disrupting the U.S.-sponsored negotiations by escalating terrorist attacks against Israel. Iran has exploited this common interest by throwing its support behind radical Palestinian Muslims, thereby gaining influence among Palestinian Sunnis, who formerly distrusted Iranian Shiites.

Iran also has become the chief supporter and ally of Sudan's National Islamic Front, a radical Sunni movement that came to power following Lt. General Omar Hassan Bashir's 1989 coup. Sudan, Africa's largest state, offers Iran a strategic foothold to outflank Saudi Arabia and extend its revolutionary influence throughout North Africa and the Horn of Africa. Following President Rafsanjani's December 1991 visit to Khartoum, at least 2,000 Iranian military advisers and Revolutionary Guards were dispatched to Sudan to help train the Sudanese Army and internal security forces, according to Sudanese officials. Iranians are believed to be assisting Sudan's radical regime in its long-running war against Christian and animist Sudanese rebels in the south.

Nurturing Terrorism

Sudan is a valuable ally for Iran because of its key role in helping Tehran to expand its contacts with Sunni extremists, especially Egyptian and Palestinian groups opposed to peace negotiations with Israel. Iranian-supported Egyptian radicals can easily infiltrate the porous Sudanese-Egyptian border, seeking to overthrow the Egyptian government. The Islamic Group, which considers Sheik Omar Abdul Rahman to be its spiritual leader, has launched terrorist attacks that have killed 290 people in the last two years. Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, alarmed at Iran's growing support for his radical Muslim opposition, warned the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, James Woolsey, about Iran's increasingly aggressive policies during the latter's secret trip to Cairo in April 1993.

Egypt is one of Iran's most important targets for sub-

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version because of its historic role as the preeminent Arab power. An Islamic revolution in Egypt would send shock waves throughout the Arab world and incite Islamic revolution elsewhere. Moreover, a radical fundamentalist Egypt would break its peace treaty with Israel and render moot the United States-backed Israeli-Palestinian peace talks, which Iran has denounced as "treason." As the leading Muslim power unequivocally opposed to Israel's existence, Iran stands to gain much from prolonging the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Iran is the world's "most active state sponsor of terrorism," according to the State Department's April 1994 report "Patterns of Global Terrorism." Most recently, Iran has been implicated in terrorist attacks in Italy, Pakistan, and Turkey. Iranian intelligence agencies support terrorism, either directly or through extremist groups, primarily aimed against Iranian opposition movements, Israel, or moderate Middle Eastern regimes. Tehran has established over 20 ideological and military training camps in Iran, Lebanon, and Sudan staffed by Arabic-speaking Revolutionary Guards.

Hezbollah, Iran's most important surrogate, has become the "world's principal international terrorist organization," according to CIA Director Woolsey in testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee in July 1993. Hezbollah was responsible for the bloodiest terrorist act of 1992, the March bombing of the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires, which killed 29 people. And there were strong indications that Iranian diplomats helped plan the bombing, according to at least one senior State Department official.

IRAN'S MISSILE BUILDUP IS ESPECIALLY WORRISOME GIVEN TEHRAN'S DETERMINATION TO BUILD WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION.

The Lebanon-based Hezbollah has established groups of supporters as far away as Australia, Canada, India, Indonesia, and South America. Hezbollah's long list of terrorist atrocities include the 1983 bombing of the United States Embassy in Beirut, the 1983 bombing of the United States Marine barracks at Beirut Airport, and the kidnapping of most of the 15 Western hostages held in Lebanon between 1984 and 1991.

The last American hostages held in Lebanon were released by Hezbollah at Iran's direction in late 1991, after Tehran concluded that it could gain nothing from holding the hostages any longer. Iran's use of terrorism as an instrument of policy remains undiminished, however. In recent years, Tehran has stepped up its terrorist attacks against Iranian exile leaders and Israel. Over a dozen Iranian dissidents have been assassinated in European cities since 1987, including the August 1991 murder of former Iranian Prime Minister Shahpour Bakhtiar in Paris and the September 1992 murders of four Kurdish opposition leaders in Berlin.

Although Iranians have not recently been caught launching terrorist attacks on American targets, they still maintain surveillance over U.S. missions and personnel overseas. Iran furnishes substantial financial, logistical, and training support to terrorist groups that continue to target Americans. At a minimum, Tehran provided financial support for some of the Islamic militants arrested for the February 1993 bombing that killed six people at the World Trade Center in New York. Sheik Omar Abdul Rahman, the radical Egyptian cleric who inspired the bombers—and may have directed them—long has been funded by Iran's intelligence service, according to Vincent Cannistraro, former head of CIA counterterrorism operations.

While no direct Iranian participation has been established in the World Trade Center bombing, senior U. S. officials warned in March 1993 that Iranian-backed terrorist groups appeared to be becoming more aggressive. Iran also reportedly has begun cooperating with non-Islamic terrorist groups such as the Abu Nidal organization, a renegade Palestinian terrorist group that has launched some of the deadliest and most indiscriminate terrorist attacks, such as the December 1985 massacres at the Rome and Vienna airports.

Iran also financially supports the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC), a pro-Syrian group that it asked in 1988 to bomb a United States airliner in retaliation for the July 1988 accidental downing of an Iranian airliner by the *U.S.S. Vincennes*. The plot was disrupted by the arrest of a terrorist cell in Germany in October 1988. Libyan agents reportedly then bombed Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland in December 1988.

Tag Team of Terror

Under Iranian tutelage, Sudan has emerged as a leading state sponsor of international terrorism. Sudan has given sanctuary to a wide spectrum of terrorist groups, including many Arab militants who participated in the *jihad* in Afghanistan. Sudan gave Sheik Omar Abdul Rahman sanctuary before he moved to New York. Two Sudanese diplomats were implicated in the aborted plot by some of the Sheik's followers to bomb the United Nations headquarters in New York. Moreover, five of the eight suspected terrorists arrested for the plot in June 1993 were Sudanese.

Although Iran claims that most of its personnel in Sudan are engaged in construction projects, persistent reports indicate that the Revolutionary Guards are training Islamic revolutionaries and terrorists, primarily from Algeria, Egypt, and Tunisia. American officials say that Iranians train terrorists in five camps around Khartoum that are equipped and financed by Iran.

Meanwhile, the Egyptian government contends that 2,500 Egyptian Islamic revolutionaries have received training from Iranians in Sudanese camps. Egyptian intelligence officials claim to have evidence that Iran was responsible for training and organizing terrorists who have attacked foreign tourists in Egypt. Algeria expelled Iranian diplomats in November 1992 and broke diplo-

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matic relations with Iran in March 1993 after accusing Tehran of supporting Islamic radicals who have waged a guerrilla war against Algeria's military regime.

Sudan has become in effect a new Lebanon, where Iranian revolutionaries arm, train, and equip radical Arab Islamists for political violence while denying responsibility for their actions. Significantly, Iran's ambassador to Sudan, Majid Kamal, helped create Hezbollah when he was the Iranian chargé d'affaires in Beirut in the early 1980s. But unlike Lebanon, where Iran's freedom of action is constrained by Syria's military domination, the radical Islamic Sudanese government fully shares Iran's revolutionary goals. In light of mounting evidence of Sudanese complicity in terrorist operations, in August 1993 the U.S. State Department placed Sudan on the list of states that sponsor terrorism.

Reuters/Bettmann

Hezbollah members display the bodies of dead comrades killed by Syrian forces. An Iranian-sponsored terrorist group, Hezbollah is the "world's principal international terrorist organization," according to the director of the CIA.

Missile Purchases

So far, Iran poses only a limited conventional military threat to its neighbors. Since the 1979 revolution, its armed forces have been weakened by political purges, huge losses of up to 60 percent of its major weapons systems in its eight-year war with Iraq, and shortages of spare parts for American and Western arms supplied before 1979.

However, President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani clearly is determined to expand Iran's military strength. Shortly after coming to power in July 1989, Rafsanjani travelled to Moscow to sign a $1.9 billion arms deal that included 48 modern MiG-29 *Fulcrum* fighters and 100 T-72 tanks. In January 1990, his government allocated $2 billion per year for five years to buy advanced weapons.

Although a drop in oil prices leading to lower-than-expected oil revenues has forced Iran to slow the pace of its military buildup in recent months, the scale of Iran's across-the-board military expansion remains impressive. Iran's long-term objective is to acquire a modern air force of roughly 300 advanced combat aircraft (principally Russian-made MiG-29 *Fulcrum,* MiG-31 *Foxhound* and Su-24 *Fencer* fighters and fighter-bombers); a modern army with 5,000 to 6,000 tanks, 2,000 self-propelled artillery pieces, and thousands of armored personnel carriers; and a navy upgraded with at least three advanced Russian *Kilo*-class submarines and scores of fast patrol boats armed with missiles.

Iran also has purchased hundreds of ballistic missiles and the technology to produce them from North Korea and China. By late 1992 Tehran had acquired at least 300 SCUD-B surface-to-surface missiles with a range of approximately 185 miles, and an unknown number of improved SCUD-Cs, which have a range of approximately 370 miles. These missiles enable Iran to attack states across the Persian Gulf. Iran also reportedly has agreed to buy 150 North Korean Nodong 1 missiles with an estimated range of over 600 miles. These surface-to-surface missiles are capable of delivering conventional, chemical, or nuclear warheads on targets as far away as Israel.

The Nuclear Threat

Like Iraq in the 1980s, much of Iran's military buildup is being subsidized by foreign borrowing. France, Germany, Japan, and other nations continue to seek expanded trade ties with Iran—Germany is Iran's largest source of imports—and have granted Iran several billion dollars and have supported hundreds of millions of dollars in loans through the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. As a result, Iran rapidly has

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accumulated a foreign debt of $30 billion, which it has found increasingly difficult to finance, let alone repay. By the end of the 1990s, Iran could find itself mired in debt, hamstrung by a stagnant economy and equipped with a large army that casts a long shadow over its neighbors.

Iran's missile buildup is especially worrisome given Tehran's determination to build weapons of mass destruction. The CIA estimates that Iran has produced and stockpiled up to 2,000 tons of chemical warfare agents, which it used at least once during the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war. Iran also has an active biological warfare program and is trying to buy biological agents from Europe that could be useful in developing such weapons, according to American intelligence sources. Some U.S. experts believe that Iran already may have produced biological weapons in the form of toxins or anthrax.

But the West's chief worry is Iran's effort to develop nuclear weapons, which is believed to be making steady progress under the cover of Iran's civilian nuclear power program. The CIA estimates that Iran is eight to 10 years away from building nuclear weapons, but may be able to shorten that timetable if it gets critical foreign assistance. Israeli experts believe Tehran could shave up to five years off that projection if it can leapfrog the normal development process by obtaining key nuclear assets from the former Soviet Union. American intelligence analysts report that Iranian acquisition teams are shopping for weapons-related nuclear equipment and nuclear scientists in the former Soviet Union, concentrating on Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Ukraine.

Iran's nuclear program also benefits from commercial contracts with Western companies. Over 50 American companies and more than 230 companies worldwide have sold Iran technology or equipment that can be used for the manufacture of chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons. Though Congress promised in 1992 to levy sanctions against countries that sell "dual-use" technology to Iran, U.S. allies—especially Germany and Japan—continue to supply the technologies to Tehran. In fact, the German government approves about 80 percent of all applications by German companies for export of dual-use equipment and technology to Iran.

Korean Connection

The most likely source of direct foreign assistance for Iran's nuclear weapons program may be North Korea. The CIA suspects that Iran is funding North Korea's nuclear program and may be repaid with North Korean nuclear assistance, technology, and enriched uranium. Ominously, the two pariah states already have developed close military ties. North Korean nuclear technicians are in Iran and Iran provides roughly 40 percent of North Korea's oil needs. In addition, Russia, China, India, and Pakistan are assisting Iran's civilian nuclear program with technical help, research facilities, or equipment. In 1992, Russia and China each agreed to sell Iran two nuclear power plants. Iran, like Iraq, is believed to be using its civilian nuclear power program as a cover to obtain the technologies and expertise to build a nuclear weapon.

With Iraq's military power weakened by its 1991 Gulf War defeat and subsequent isolation, Iran looms large as the dominant Gulf power. By the late 1990s, when it is well on its way toward rebuilding and modernizing its armed forces, Iran will be tempted to exploit its newfound military muscle.

President Rafsanjani, who has staked his political future on reviving Iran's limping economy, may seek to intimidate Saudi Arabia and the smaller Gulf states to drive up the price of oil. Iran is dependent on oil exports for 85 percent of its foreign currency income, and has been hurt economically by a 30 percent fall in oil prices in 1993. Although official government projections call for Iranian oil revenues of $17 billion in 1994, Iran's oil revenues may not top $14 billion.

The weak international oil market and faltering Iranian economy have undermined the Rafsanjani regime. Iran's urban poor, the core support group of Khomeini's revolution, have become increasingly disgruntled with the regime's corruption, systematic human-rights violations, and economic mismanagement.

Growing discontent with Iran's high rates of unemployment and inflation, plus shortages of housing and food, precipitated riots and protests in the cities of Arak, Mashhad, Shiraz, and Tabriz in 1992. After harshly suppressing the riots, the Rafsanjani regime borrowed money from abroad to purchase imported food and appliances to quell the discontent. The regime now finds itself unable to pay for this import binge, and it has become heavily dependent on foreign creditors. A similar situation of declining political popularity, burdensome foreign loans, and a costly military buildup led Saddam Hussein to invade Kuwait.

Provoking a Crisis

Unable to satisfy Iranian expectations of economic prosperity, Rafsanjani may seek to divert the attention of Iranians with stepped up efforts to export the revolution, a war of nerves with the Arab monarchies across the Persian Gulf, or heightened tensions with America.

If Tehran cannot persuade the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) to raise oil prices, it may try to force an oil-price hike either through military intimidation or by provoking a crisis. Iran could sabotage Gulf oil facilities; it has already flaunted its ability to launch underwater commando strikes against offshore and coastal targets in highly publicized naval exercises. Tehran could escalate tensions with Qatar over a disputed offshore natural gas field, or covertly mine oil-shipping routes in the Persian Gulf or, with Sudan's help, the Red Sea. Each of these actions could drive up oil prices.

The United States has a vested interest in preventing Iran from ratcheting up world oil prices or lunging Saddam-like at its neighbors' oil reserves. In a post-Cold War world that seems to confound the administration's foreign policy advisors, the Iranian threat to American interests is unambiguously clear: Washington cannot afford to allow Tehran to dominate the Persian Gulf oil basin any more than it could afford to allow Iraq to do so by invading Kuwait.

Containing Iran

Several political developments work in America's favor in taming Iranian ambitions in the region. First, as the Gulf War proved, the collapse of the Soviet threat gives

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the United States greater freedom to respond to crises and gain regional support for diplomatic and military action. Second, Desert Storm generated great respect in the Middle East for U.S. military power. And third, Tehran's need to refinance its crushing debt burden leaves it increasingly vulnerable to Western economic pressure.

The Clinton administration should exploit all of the above trends to force Iran to abandon its support of terrorism, export of subversion, and efforts to develop weapons of mass destruction. The administration got off to a good start when Secretary of State Christopher branded Iran an "outlaw state" on March 30, 1993. Washington followed this up by announcing its "dual containment" policy toward Iran and Iraq on May 18, 1993. According to this policy, the United States seeks to contain Iran without relaxing pressure on Iraq and vice versa. In practice, however, Iran has proven much harder to contain than Iraq because of the lack of support from America's European and Japanese allies, who view Iran as a lucrative export market.

To strengthen Western containment of Iran, the Clinton administration must:

Rule out searching for Iranian "moderates." Despite the claims of Europeans and Japanese eager to increase trade with Iran, there are no "moderates" left in Iran's ruling regime. Such men were discredited and purged long ago. There are pragmatic radicals, such as President Rafsanjani, whose revolutionary militancy has been tempered by a keen desire to stay in power. But Rafsanjani's policy differences with his more radical rivals tend to be tactical in nature; they share the same goals but disagree about the means of implementation. While Rafsanjani seeks to safeguard Khomeini's revolution by building a strong Iranian state and economy, many radicals, such as former Interior Minister Ali Akbar Mohtashemi, give a higher priority to promoting revolution outside Iran.

Both the pragmatists and the radicals threaten American interests. The pragmatists are the driving force behind Iran's military buildup, while the radicals direct Iran's activities to export revolution. Washington should seek to block both of their goals, not seek to promote one faction over the other, which is beyond America's power anyway.

The Clinton administration should learn from the Reagan administration's mistake in trying to cooperate and sell arms to Iranian "moderates" in the mid-1980s. Washington should avoid reaching out to Iranian factions, even if they appear to be less hostile than rival factions, because this only would discredit the United States in the Iranian political arena, where an American connection is politically fatal. Instead of seeking a fragile accommodation with Iranian "moderates," Washington should work relentlessly to penalize Iran for policies that threaten American interests.

Take a hard line against Iranian terrorism. As with other administration forays into foreign policy, the White House has done little to back up its rhetoric. Secretary of State Christopher, for example, failed to push through a tougher anti-Iran policy at the G-7 summit in Tokyo last year. More importantly, he has failed to keep key allies from backsliding on the issue of Iranian terrorism: Last October, Germany hosted a visit by Iran's Minister of

Reuters/Bettmann

Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman, the radical Egyptian cleric who inspired the 1993 bombing of New York's World Trade Center, is funded by Iran.

Intelligence and Security, Ali Fallahiyan, who oversees much of Iran's terrorist operations; France appeased Iran last December by expelling two suspected Iranian terrorists whose extradition had been sought by Switzerland for the 1990 assassination of an Iranian dissident in Geneva.

Christopher must turn up the heat on Germany, France, and other states that resist tougher Western collective action against Iranian terrorism. But the secretary of state is in no position to stiffen European spines against Iranian terrorism, given the State Department's downgrading of its own Office of Counterterrorism and the paring of 40 percent of its staff. If Christopher is to be credible as an advocate of a stronger Western response to Iranian terrorism, then he must restore the status of the State Department's counterterrorism office. And Christopher must raise the priority accorded to counterterrorism efforts within the Clinton administration, which stumbled badly by allowing Gerry Adams, the mouthpiece of the terrorist Irish Republican Army, to enter the United States on January 31 for a two-day visit.

Maintain strong United States and allied military forces in the Persian Gulf to deter Iran. The administration cannot afford to jeopardize the hard-won security of the Gulf oil fields by excessive cutbacks in the defense budget. The administration's current plans call for a

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reduction in defense spending that will make it impossible by 1999 to maintain continuous naval deployments to all the key regions where America has vital interests. This draw-down in naval strength must be stopped; further cuts in the defense budget should be found elsewhere.

In particular, Pentagon planners must maintain strong naval power projection forces, including 12 aircraft carriers, a strong Marine Corps capable of rapidly deploying to the Persian Gulf, and adequate airlift and sealift assets to quickly deploy a Desert Storm-sized force to the Persian Gulf. To avoid a political backlash against the presence of foreign military forces, Iran or local anti-Western forces could exploit, the United States should station as few ground troops as necessary in the region. Instead, U.S. forces should rely as much as possible on pre-positioned military equipment and supplies to facilitate the rapid deployment of United States troops in a crisis.

The growing Iranian missile threat also should impel the Clinton administration to increase its commitment to the development of anti-missile defenses, which are threatened by budget cutbacks. In particular, Washington should continue to support the six-year-old joint Israeli-American Arrow anti-missile missile program. Further, the administration should explore additional Israeli-American cooperation in fielding a boost-phase anti-missile system. The United States also should field anti-missile forces that can be projected into the Middle East, including the ground-based Theater High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system and the sea-based Aegis weapons system/Standard missile upgrade program.

Thwart and delay Iran's military buildup. The United States already has imposed stiff sanctions on Iran that prohibit sales of American military equipment and military technology. But America's allies continue to export dual-use equipment and technologies to Iran. Washington must step up pressure on its allies to curb such sales, by publicly chastising them for making the same mistake with Iran that they made with Iraq in the 1980s. The West cannot afford to put short-term economic gains ahead of its interests in nonproliferation and in the long-term stability of the Persian Gulf.

To obtain allied cooperation on restricting dual-use sales to Iran, Washington must reaffirm the ban on the sale of United States airliners to Iran and block the proposed sale of up to 20 American-made Boeing 737 jetliners to Iran, worth more than $750 million. Selling these airliners, which could have a dual use in transporting Iranian soldiers, would cripple American efforts to persuade reluctant allies to sacrifice their commercial interests for long-term Western strategic interests. The Clinton administration has delayed final consideration of approving the sale, reluctant to take an action that could cost American jobs. But there is no evidence that Iran can afford to buy these airliners anyway, given its current difficulties in repaying its foreign debt.

Washington also must step up pressure on Russia and China to restrict their arms sales to Iran. To gain Russian agreement, the administration should warn Moscow that the United States foreign aid program to Russia, already facing rising congressional opposition, may be further jeopardized by continued Russian arms sales and nuclear cooperation with Iran. The administration also should remind Moscow that the restrictions on the sale of advanced technologies, lifted to assist Russia's post-Cold War economic development, might be reimposed if Russia does not break off its military and nuclear cooperation with Iran.

The same applies to China, which has sold Iran some of its most dangerous weapons, including missiles, chemical warfare materials, and nuclear technologies. The administration should reverse course and restrict the sale of advanced computers, satellites, and sophisticated machine tools to China. Such economic sanctions would also give Washington more credibility in urging the Europeans and Japan to place similar restrictions on technology sales to Iran.

Deny Iran Western loans and aid. Ultimately, the best means of restricting Iran's access to arms markets may be to restrict its access to Western capital markets. Tehran cannot repay about $8 billion of its short-term debt. It is now seeking to renegotiate its debt payments to Germany, Japan, and other foreign creditors.

Washington should press its allies to deny the rescheduling of Iran's burgeoning debt on favorable terms. It should insist that the World Bank and other international financial institutions not give Iran favorable treatment, and more realistically consider the political and economic risks of lending to Iran. Such loans in effect subsidize Iran's military buildup, terrorism, and subversion.

Iran is unwilling to accept any conditions for stretching out repayment schedules that might be set by international groups such as the Paris Club of Western creditor nations. Instead, it is seeking to negotiate bilaterally with each of its foreign creditors to maximize its bargaining leverage in negotiations to restructure its debt. The United States should press Iran's creditors to block this gambit by rejecting bilateral negotiations in favor of building a united position through strict adherence to Paris Club procedures for debt rescheduling.

Iran already has been forced to cancel some of its arms purchases because of a lack of hard currency, which has constrained it from exceeding $850 million per year in annual outlays for weapons. By denying Tehran new Western loans and setting tough conditions for the rescheduling of existing debt, Iran's Western creditors would put enormous pressure on President Rafsanjani to trim back his ambitious military plans to cover Iran's domestic economic needs. If similar steps had been taken with Iraq, Saddam Hussein would not have posed such a threat to Kuwait and to Western interests in the Persian Gulf region.

Prohibit American oil companies from buying Iranian oil. American oil companies currently are prohibited from importing Iranian oil into the United States, but are allowed to buy it for resale elsewhere. Six American oil companies buy about one-fourth of Iran's oil exports, worth more than $3.5 billion per year, to refine and sell in Europe and Japan. They have replaced Japan as Iran's biggest oil customer since 1992.

President Clinton should issue an executive order prohibiting such oil purchases, which suggest that Washington cynically is conducting business as usual with Iran while calling on its allies to restrict trade with that country. This would strengthen the U.S. case for collective West-

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Arab leaders as diverse as militant Iraqi president Saddam Hussein (left) and the moderate Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak face increasing threats from Iran's expanded military and nuclear capabilities.

ern economic pressure against Tehran. Moreover, as long as the international oil market remains weak, Iran may have to shave its oil prices to find alternative buyers for its oil. This could slightly reduce Iranian oil revenues from their projected level of roughly $14 billion in 1994.

Collision Course

Iran and the United States are on a collision course, given Iran's aggressive support of terrorism and radical groups in recent years. Washington must lead an international coalition capable of containing the expansion of Iranian influence and slowing Iran's military buildup.

While a containment strategy cannot preclude Iran from obtaining weapons of mass destruction and missiles to deliver them, it can delay their acquisition and buy time to strengthen deterrence against Iranian aggression, deploy anti-missile defenses, and pressure Tehran to reconsider its support of terrorism and revolution. Containment also can buy time to enable the West to acquire the intelligence necessary for targeting Iran's weapons of mass destruction in a military strike, if necessary. The United States should press its allies to maintain relentless economic pressure on Iran until the Islamic regime either gives up military plans and stops threatening its neighbors, or until it collapses.

Containing the Iranian revolution will not be easy. Iran's leaders aim to establish Iran as the leader of the Muslim world. They have launched a cultural crusade that they hope will ignite the Islamic world against the West. According to their own statements, they are on a mission from God. The United States therefore cannot afford to underestimate their commitment to revolution or the seriousness of the Iranian threat. But with a patient, firm and unified Western response, Iran can successfully be contained and tamed in much less than the 40-plus years that it took to contain and tame the Soviet Union.

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SERFDOM USA

How Far Have We Traveled Down Hayek's "Road"?

DICK ARMEY, MALCOLM S. FORBES JR., MILTON FRIEDMAN, PHIL GRAMM, VIRGINIA POSTREL, JENNIFER ROBACK, JUDY SHELTON, FRED L. SMITH JR.

The free world celebrates two special 50th anniversaries this year. One is of D-Day, the beginning of the end of Nazi Germany's evil empire. The other is the publication of *The Road to Serfdom*, by Friedrich Hayek, which warned that Britain, America and other free nations that were expanding the welfare state and adopting centralized economic controls were unintentionally traveling down the same road to serfdom that led to fascism in Germany and communism in Russia. Hayek's *Road*, and his later works such as *The Constitution of Liberty* and *Law, Legislation and Liberty*, are among the most influential books in modern conservatism. To mark its semicentennial, *Policy Review* asked some of America's most thoughtful students of freedom to answer whether our country has moved closer or further from serfdom in the 50 years since Hayek's prophecy.

DICK ARMEY

Certainly we've travelled further down the road to serfdom since 1944, but that's really not the interesting question. The real issue is, in which direction on that road are we heading now? I believe we have just made a screeching U-turn and are now heading back toward freedom—but Washington doesn't know it yet.

Ironically, things in this country began to go wrong at the precise moment Hayek was writing. That's when our statists conceived income-tax withholding, the scheme that made our modern leviathan possible. In the old days, when free Americans paid their taxes out of their own wallets, there was a limit to how much revenue our statists could raise without having a rebellion on their hands. People could see how much they paid the government, and judge if the return was worth it. But once World War II gave the statists an excuse to take our money from our paychecks before we even touched it, the obscene growth of the government became inexorable.

Today, we are staggering beneath a bloated government that spends over $24,000 for each household in America, an amount equal to almost 40 percent of the nation's economy. Every cent a typical American earns from New Year's Day to May 5 he in effect surrenders to the government. Throw in the hidden cost of government regulations—a concealed tax of over a half-trillion dollars a year—and it is not until July 13 that he stops working for the political class and begins working for himself. Young families with children suffer the cruelest burden. When millions of American couples need a second income, they need it not to support their children, but to support the government. Yes, we are indeed frighteningly close to serfdom.

But liberation is at hand. For all the gloom of the Clinton term, we must remember that a paradigm-shattering revolution has just taken place. In the signal events of the 1980s—from the collapse of communism to the Reagan economic boom to the rise of the computer—the idea of economic freedom has been overwhelming vindicated. The intellectual foundation of statism has turned to dust. This revolution has been so sudden and sweeping that few in Washington have yet grasped its full meaning—which is why the Clinton plan to nationalize our health care is actually taken seriously. But when the true significance of the 1980s freedom revolution sinks in, politics, culture—indeed, the entire human outlook—will change.

Capitalism will lose its century-old connotation of materialism and greed, and will at last be recognized as an unambiguous good, the only system compatible with our creative human natures. The redistributionist pessimism of today's elites will give way to a new populist optimism of growth and opportunity. Policies that restrict economic freedom will suddenly seem backwards and reactionary; those that expand it will be seen as enlightened and progressive. And the Clinton administration will be remembered as an anomaly, the last gasp of a cause that had already been lost.

Once this shift takes place—by 1996, I predict—we will then be able to advance a true Hayekian agenda, including a flat tax, radical spending cuts, the end of the public school monopoly, a free market health-care system, and the elimination of the family-destroying welfare dole. Unlike 1944, history is now on the side of freedom.

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MALCOLM S. FORBES JR.

The road to serfdom has changed direction to the road to freedom. The combination of high technology and the failure of socialism has given traditional liberalism a new lease on life.

Industrialization was once seen by many observers as the enemy of the individual. Mass production meant monotonous assembly lines. Factories meant uprooting people from traditional rural societies to rootless, impersonal urban environments. An industrial economy meant more complex, more remote hierarchies. On the land, the peasant or the small farmer personally knew, or at least was familiar with, the landlord and members of the gentry. An auto worker, by contrast, rarely, if ever, saw the chairman of General Motors.

Friedrich Hayek

Non-Marxist intellectuals viewed industrialization as a Faustian bargain where people sacrificed their humanity to enjoy a better material life. Marxists saw workers being impoverished as well as dehumanized.

Thus socialism was seen by many supposedly thoughtful people as a means of bringing fellowship and unselfish, uncoerced cooperation among workers in the workplace as well as enriching their standard of living.

Three catastrophes—the two world wars and the Great Depression—made some sort of collectivism seem the wave of the future.

World War I, with its totally unexpected, seemingly pointless battlefield slaughter of an unimagined, horrific scale shattered the faith of many in the beliefs and institutions of Western civilization. The individualism glorified in the 19th century seemed hopelessly quaint after the First World War. The war was a catalyst for massive government penetration into and domination of society on a scale utterly inconceivable before the conflict.

The Great Depression discredited American-style laissez-faire economics. Given this catastrophic contraction, economists concluded, free markets could not be left to themselves. The notion of a mixed, peacetime economy was born. Politically, the Depression discredited Parliamentary democracy. After World War I most European countries either had or established democratic governments. By the mid-1930s, all but a handful had collapsed. Parliamentary democracy was seen as weak, corrupt, incompetent. By contrast, fascism and Nazism seemed more modern, brisk, efficient.

It took a world war to defeat Nazi-style totalitarianism. But this war also gave—for a while anyway—enormous prestige to the totalitarian Soviet Union. After the experiences of the inter-war years, even Western Europe saw some measure of socialism, or "social democracy," as an antidote to unemployment and as an agent for a humane society.

This was the environment in which Hayek wrote his book. Most politicos, writers, academics and "generally informed" people believed in some variation of what came to be called the welfare state.

How different the environment is today. Even socialists have to disguise their agendas with free market rhetoric à la Bill Clinton, or in the garb of Al Gore's apocalyptic environmentalism, or with European-style protectionism. The administration's attempt to *de facto* nationalize health care is the last great offensive of the collectivists.

Technology is now an agent of individualism. The microchip, which is expanding the reach of the human brain the way machines expanded the reach of the human muscle in the last century, is flattening hierarchies the way electricity physically flattened factories when it replaced steam power in the early part of this century. We simply don't need as many layers of management to process information as we did before. The corporate sector has been undergoing this process for years; the public sector will soon be hit with it, too.

The microchip is the enemy of the tyrant. Not so long ago, money had to be transported physically by, say, putting bars of gold in ship bottoms or in wagons. Governments could literally prohibit their citizens from moving their wealth outside of their jurisdictions. Today the blip of a computer can transport hundreds of billions of dollars in less than a second.

Dictators can enslave the body, but they can no longer capture the true source of wealth, the human mind.

Wealth is less and less being measured by material resources. Resource-rich Brazil remains mired in an economic morass. Resourceless Hong Kong, which has to import its drinking water, is one of the richest and most densely populated specks of real estate on the earth today.

Now that the Cold War is over, the United States is paying serious attention to its extraordinary surge of violent crime and to soaring rates of illegitimacy. What was somewhat tolerated when we faced an external threat, has become intolerable now that the threat has been

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"Capitalism will lose its century-old connotation of materialism and greed, and will at last be recognized as an unambiguous good, the only system compatible with our creative human natures." —Dick Armey

removed. We are seeing the stirrings of a number of reform movements, especially spiritual ones. A harbinger: Bill Bennett's best-selling, *The Book of Virtues.*

People today want to improve their lives, not only materially, but in quality as well. We may soon be experiencing a modern version of the Great Awakening that so profoundly influenced pre-Revolutionary America in the mid-18th century.

MALCOLM S. FORBES JR. *is editor-in-chief of* Forbes *magazine.*

MILTON FRIEDMAN

The fall of the Berlin Wall, the collapse of communism behind the Iron Curtain, and the changing character of China have reduced the defenders of a Marxian-type collectivism to a small hardy band concentrated in Western universities. Today there is wide agreement that socialism is a failure, and capitalism a success. Yet this apparent conversion of the intellectual community to what might be called a Hayekian view is deceptive.

While the talk is about free markets and private property, and it is more respectable than it was a few decades ago to defend near-complete laissez-faire, the bulk of the intellectual community almost automatically favors any expansion of government power so long as it is advertised as a way to protect individuals from big, bad corporations, relieve poverty, protect the environment, or promote "equality."

The present discussion of a national program of health care provides a striking example. The intellectuals may have learned the words but they do not yet have the tune.

The message of *The Road to Serfdom* is even more relevant to the United States today than half a century ago. Intellectual opinion then was far more hostile to the book's theme than it appears to be now, but practice conformed to it far more than today. Post-World War II government was smaller and less intrusive than it is today. Lyndon Johnson's Great Society programs, including Medicare and Medicaid, and George Bush's Clean Air and Americans with Disability acts were all still ahead, let alone the numerous other extensions of government that Ronald Reagan was only able to slow down, not reverse in his eight years in office. Total government spending—federal, state, and local—in the United States has gone from 26 percent of national income in 1950 to nearly 45 percent in 1993.

Much the same has been true in Britain, in one sense more dramatically. The Labour Party, formerly openly socialist, now defends free private markets; and the Conservative Party, once content to administer Labour's socialist policies, has tried to reverse—and to some extent under Margaret Thatcher succeeded in reversing—the extent of government ownership and operation. But Margaret Thatcher was unable to call on anything like the reservoir of popular support for liberal values that led to the withdrawal of the "control of engagements" order shortly after World War II. And while there has been a considerable amount of "privatization" there as here, government today spends a larger fraction of the national income and is more intrusive than it was in 1950.

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On both sides of the Atlantic, it is only a little overstated to say that we preach individualism and competitive capitalism, and practice socialism.

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PHIL GRAMM

The Road to Serfdom didn't predict that greater government control over the economy would lead to totalitarianism overnight. Rather, Hayek argued that "the most important change which extensive government control produces is a psychological change, an alteration in the character of the people." He sensed that people would *gradually* lose their spirit of self-reliance and independence, would *gradually* surrender their freedom for the promise of greater security. He feared that serfdom would arrive with a whimper, not a bang.

I think some of the demoralization Hayek predicted has unquestionably taken place, even in America. The latest example is that in the last few months, three different pollsters have found that when Americans are asked, "Do you feel your children are going to do better than you have done?" by almost a 2-to-1 margin, they say, "No."

This loss of faith in the American dream is a direct consequence of the growth of intrusive, burdensome and initiative-smothering government.

As a measure of this growth, consider the following: In 1950, the average American family making the median income with 2 children sent $1 out of every $50 it earned to Washington. Today, the average American family sends $1 out of every $4 it earns to Washington.

Such a massive transfer of resources has had a remarkable effect. By taking income and decision-making power from families and small businesses, politicians have encouraged people to believe that they are no longer in charge of their own destinies, that their salvation lies in Washington. For Americans misled by politicians who "feel your pain," the American dream of success through hard work, sturdy self-reliance, and personal responsibility seems increasingly stale. It could not be otherwise for those who embrace the notion that success lies in defining themselves as victims.

If that trend gathers momentum, the entire shape of our social and political landscape will change for the worse. As government expands and the American dream fades, social mobility will become the exception rather than the rule. America will increasingly come to be divided along class lines, and the politics of resentment will replace the politics of hope and opportunity. Such a climate is hardly conducive to the success of liberty.

All of this stops well short of saying that Hayek's prediction is on the cusp of coming true. Socialism as well as totalitarianism failed and were rejected in Eastern Europe. In my heart, I know that America's destiny is, and always will be, freedom—provided we mend our ways.

In Dickens's *A Christmas Carol,* a chastened Ebenezer Scrooge, horrified by his glimpse of the future that seemingly awaits him, asks the Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come, "Are these the shadows of things that will be, or are these the shadows of the things that may be, only?" Every child knows the answer to Scrooge's question: By altering his behavior, he alters his destiny.

UPI/Bettmann

"In 1944, technology and science appeared to side with serfdom, with mass production and monopoly, with social engineering."—Virginia Postrel

So can we. If we want to get off the road to serfdom, we must make the relentless pursuit of freedom our purpose, the empowerment of every American family our goal. The battle for individual freedom will *not* be decided in Eastern Europe or in the Third World. It will be won or lost not in the Kremlin but in the Capitol. If the road to serfdom is to be the road not taken, liberty must be reaffirmed here in America. That was Hayek's mission when he charted *The Road to Serfdom,* and it should be ours now.

PHIL GRAMM *is the senior senator from Texas and is chairman of the National Republican Senatorial Committee.*

VIRGINIA POSTREL

When *The Road to Sefdom* was published, Americans were putting up with government actions they would never tolerate today—rationing, wage and price controls, draconian export restrictions, the imprisonment of innocent Japanese-Americans and the confiscation of their property, the draft—not only because wartime seemed to justify such measures but because the reigning ideology deemed them fair and efficient. At least in our attitudes, we have come a long way from serfdom.

When Hayek laments "the increasing veneration for the state, the admiration of power, and of bigness for bigness' sake, the enthusiasm for 'organization' of every-

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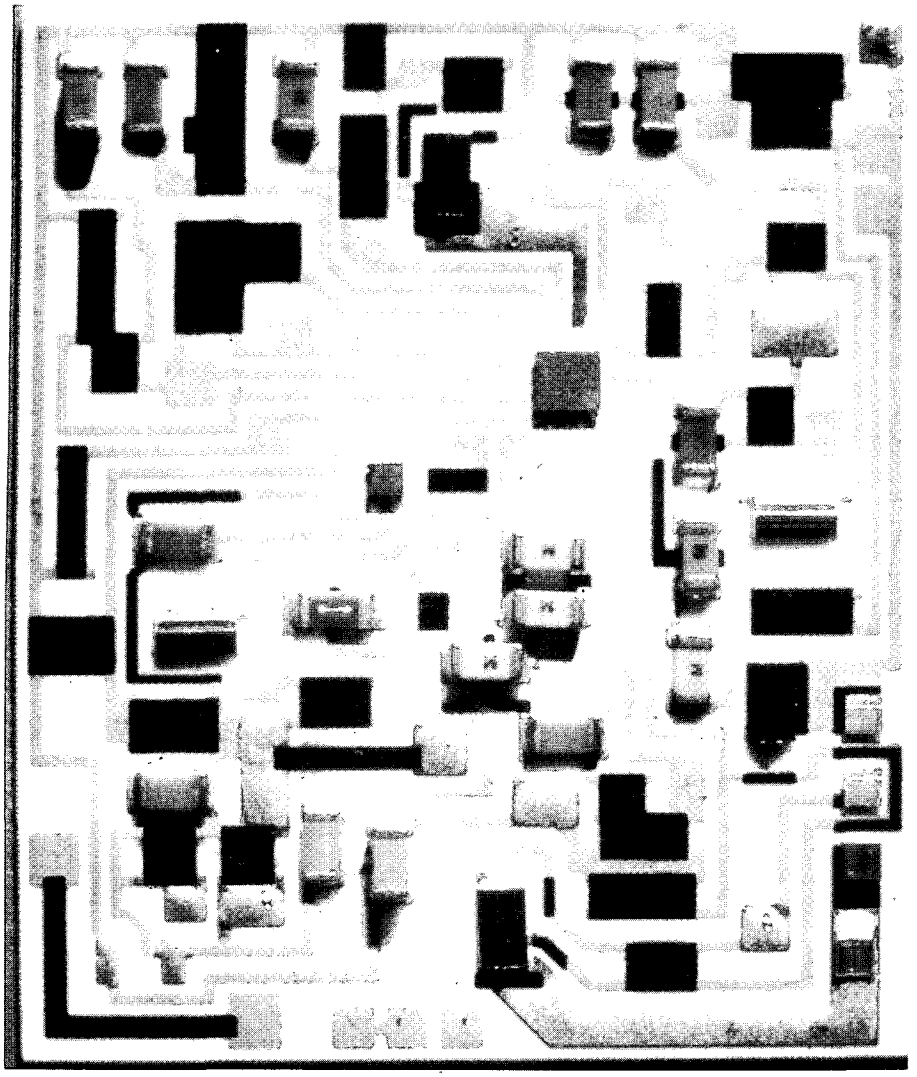

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"The microchip is the enemy of the tyrant. Today the blip of a computer can transport billions of dollars in less than a second."—Malcolm S. Forbes Jr.

thing..., and that 'inability to leave anything to the simple power of organic growth,'" we see his times, not ours. That veneration of government, that love of bigness, vanished with the Great Society and Watergate, the Organization Man and the Feminine Mystique, gas lines and stagflation.

The self-centered politics of the older baby boomers, despite their dangerous excesses, weakened the notion that government should subordinate individual happiness to the social good. And the cynicism of younger Americans mocks the old boomers' remaining faith in activist government. Somehow, too, we avoided the "piling-up of restrictions on the movement of men and goods" that full-blown serfdom requires. World trade busted the monopolies Hayek feared as both the effect of and the justification of regulation; today we're actually beginning to see competition in electricity.

In 1944, technology and science appeared to side with serfdom, with mass production and monopoly, and with social engineering. Today, these very disciplines undercut the arguments for uniformity and control. Emergent behavior, chaos theory, complexity, genetic algorithms, and evolutionary systems all encourage dynamic, Hayekian world views.

The personal computer demonstrates that revolutionary inventions can come from unknown misfits, weakening the argument for "rational planning." No bureaucrat would have forseen Apple or backed Bill Gates. The cheap biotechnology of the next generation makes forecasting even less predictable.

Hayek feared that young people would choose security over independence. Today, we are struggling to figure out how to live again in a world of independence. Reconstructing the virtues that Hayek cherished—"independence, self-reliance, and the willingness to voluntary co-operation with one's neighbors"—is the difficult task ahead.

The road to serfdom is in disrepair. But we have not yet escaped it. Most of the regulations remain, despite the changed *Zeitgeist*, and Hayek never envisioned the controls environmentalism would bring. The Clinton administration still celebrates German security and order, learning nothing from Hayek's day. Its health-care scheme, with its destruction of individual plans and its contempt for innovation, is a blueprint for serfdom. The Food and Drug Administration is running amok. A twisted version of feminism is bringing government into ever more intimate areas of life.

Perhaps, like the children of Israel, we must wait for the old serfs to die. Perhaps even that will not suffice. But we are better off than we were 50 years ago. Back then people really believed in planning, uniformity, and bigness. Now most Americans would find such notions laughable or threatening. And changing minds is the prerequisite for changing policies.

VIRGINIA POSTREL *is editor of* Reason.

JENNIFER ROBACK

Without question, the poor and working-class of America are closer to serfdom now than they were 50 years ago. For the political process has systematically closed every market in which they can compete without assistance. The poor now exist at the sufferance of other people. They are indeed serfs.

The jobs that people of modest means can perform have been drastically limited, by a variety of regulations, the minimum wage being only the best-known example. But the restrictions include health and safety regulations, as well as a panoply of mandated benefits, such as family leave policies. The result is a two-tiered labor market, in which the privileged few have very good jobs, and large numbers of people have either no job at all, or part-time,

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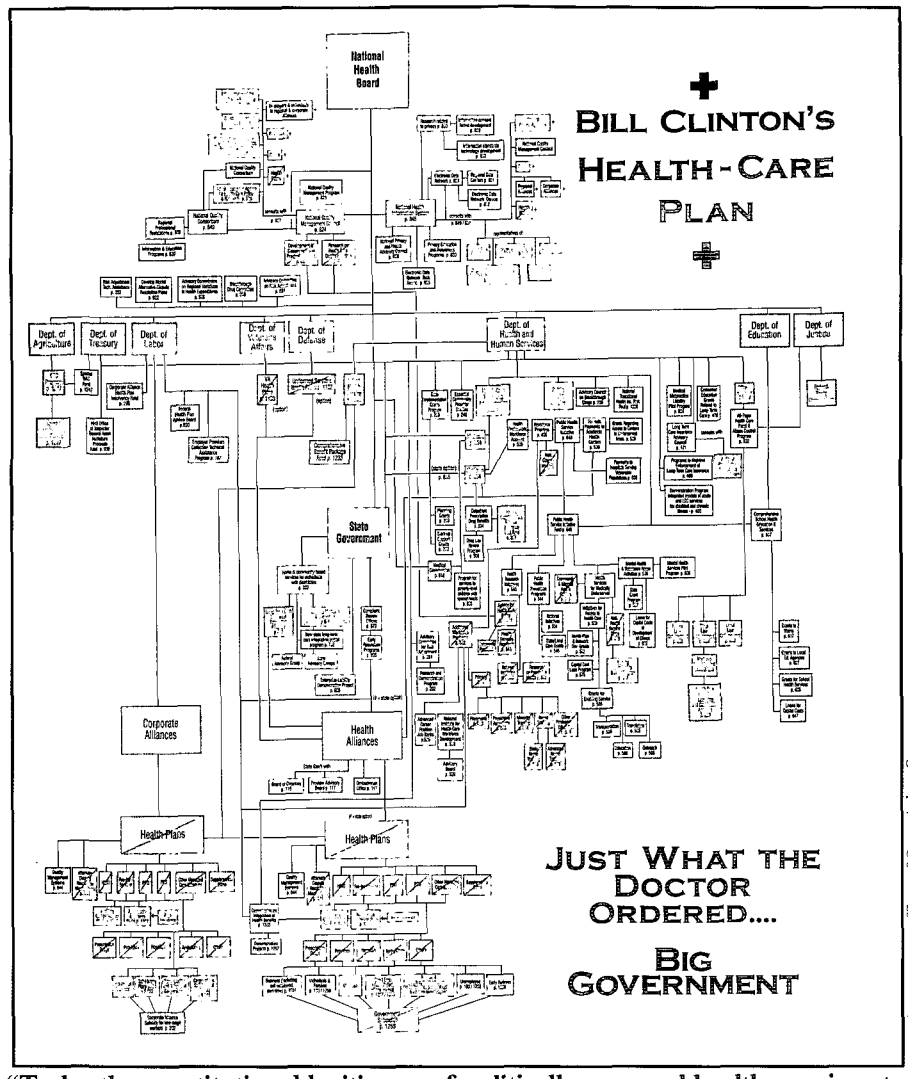
part-year jobs, for which the mandated benefits are not required.

Poor and working-class people can no longer provide or purchase for themselves a variety of services. The research of David Beito shows that the poor used to be able to purchase low-priced and low-quality housing. As the family accumulated more money, they would place their old dwelling onto rollers, and roll it into the back lot, and build themselves a nicer home. They would rent out the older house, often to elderly family members, or to young family members just beginning their own families. In this way, the poor provided not only housing, but capital and community, for themselves. Outlawing the "backlot tenement" was one of the first objectives of progressive reformers. Through fraternal societies, the working class provided health care, life insurance, disability insurance, and recreation. Members of fraternal societies often received the services of a "lodge practice doctor," as part of their annual dues. The doctor made house calls, and provided services to the lodge member and his entire family. Outlawing the lodge practice doctors was one of the principal objectives of medical reformers.

The knowledge of how to create a life without the state is dying off with the last generation of working-class people who actually lived that life. My father was a founding member of his parish. The school my siblings and I attended charged no tuition and was completely supported by the parish. My father was a founding member of his local chapter of the Catholic Order of Foresters, a fraternal society that provided, among other things, life insurance. We buried our father this fall. I do not know if our generation will have the knowledge and the character to recreate the world of voluntary cooperation of which he was a part.



graphic courtesy office of Sen. Arlen Specter

"Today the constitutional legitimacy of politically managed health care is not even debated or questioned."—Fred L. Smith Jr.

JENNIFER ROBACK *is associate professor of economics at George Mason University.*

JUDY SHELTON

In terms of monetary integrity, we are closer to serfdom today, for reasons that might seem counterintuitive.

As we contemplate Hayek's warning 50 years ago about the incremental loss of individual freedom under the encroachment of socialist planning, we should remember that 1994 also marks the 50th anniversary of the Bretton Woods conference. For all the grandiose notions of its architects, John Maynard Keynes and Harry Dexter White, and their shared penchant for creating supranational agencies to manage economic and financial affairs, the Bretton Woods agreement hammered out in July 1944 set the stage for a generation of unprecedented global trade and prosperity in the decades following World War II.

One of the unintended consequences of the Bretton Woods system was to place restrictions on the ability of the U.S. government to depreciate the value of currency as a means of absorbing fiscal indulgences. By imposing the obligation of having to convert dollars into gold at a fixed rate of $35 per ounce when so requested by a foreign central bank, the system laid the responsibility for maintaining international monetary stability squarely at the feet of the United States.

That the U.S. government would ultimately disavow that responsibility—deeming it a burden rather than a privilege—after engaging in accommodative monetary expansion during the 1960s calls into question the inherent flaws of the Bretton Woods approach, but not its basic purpose: To provide a sound international monetary regime to facilitate the optimum use of trade and capital flows around the world.

Should the golden era of Bretton Woods be judged in

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"By taking income and decision-making power away from families and small businesses, politicians have encouraged people to believe that they are no longer in charge of their own destinies."—Phil Gramm

Hayekian terms as an example of "the fatal conceit" of ambitious social engineering? Or would Hayek's conviction that the exercise of individual economic choice serves as a primary guarantor of personal liberty suggest a more appreciative interpretation?

Hayek tells us: "Economic control is not merely control of a sector of human life which can be separated from the rest; it is the control of the means for all our ends. And whoever has sole control of the means must also determine which ends are to be served, which values are to be rated higher and which lower—in short, what men should believe and strive for."

What could be more controlling than to permit government to alter the value of money—which serves to define economic activity and provides the essential instrument for exerting individual choice in free markets? By relinquishing authority over the money supply to the discretionary inclinations of powerful men versus the automatic discipline of gold convertability, we undermine the integrity of the basic building block of democratic capitalism.

Hayek observed that "money is the greatest instrument of freedom ever invented by men." But when government has the power to distort economic choice by carrying out inflationary policies and by manipulating currencies in foreign exchange markets, government maintains a choke-hold on individual freedom.

Today, the value of the money held by Americans is a function of the decency of central bankers and government finance officials; it is a far cry from the international rule of law, not men, which Hayek deemed necessary to safeguard the interests of individuals against the tyranny of the state.

JUDY SHELTON *is a senior research fellow at the Hoover Institution.*

FRED L. SMITH JR.

As a despairing optimist, I am of two minds. As an optimist, I am elated that the forces of collectivism have suffered great setbacks during the last 50 years. The Evil Empire has collapsed. America's progressive-era economic regulatory structure has gradually been dismantled. Perhaps, most importantly, Hayek's embattled band of Mont Pelerin classical liberals has blossomed into a world-wide free market movement.

Yet, as a realist, I fear that freedom—in America at least—continues to retreat. Fifty years ago, the Constitution and American culture still restricted the scope of government. Those promoting the federal government's higher education and highway construction programs felt it necessary to rationalize such programs on "national defense" grounds. Today the constitutional legitimacy of, say, politically managed health care is not even debated or questioned. Taxes have increased in severity. Government credit and insurance schemes are more intrusive and create more mischief than in 1944. Federal welfare programs have done as much harm to minority families as anything since slavery.

Too often conservatives have focused only on one threat at a time—national defense, economic deregulation, constitutional restraints on spending—while statist

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forces have found other routes to their goals. As one statist rationale has been destroyed, they've quickly advanced another. American statists were very creative, inventing the modern regulatory state which retains the appearance of "private" enterprise while destroying the reality. Outright government ownership would be most honest, after all. Government agencies—say the Postal Service—are held somewhat responsible for their performance, while regulatory agencies exercise vast power but evade such accountability. America has moved steadily down the road toward ever-greater regulatory controls. The gains of economic deregulation were real but they have been more than offset by the losses associated with social, health, and environmental regulations. Such regulatory programs entail vague goals, universal scope, and massive delegations of authority to bureaucrats.

Environmental issues are a prime example. As the economic rationale for statism faded, arguments that we must regulate the economy to protect our planet have advanced. The results have been disastrous. A nation that once went to war to protest the uncompensated "quartering" of troops in private homes now meekly submits to federal regulators "taking" private property to host "endangered" wildlife. Other bureaucrats impose costly unfunded mandates on small businesses and municipalities. The EPA has become the most powerful economic regulator in America's history. The intellectual and moral counter-attack has barely begun.

Hayek's metaphor of a road is somewhat misleading, as Hayek certainly realized. The war for freedom has many fronts, and friends of freedom must be careful to think strategically—not to allow themselves to be deluded

Folio

"Today there is widespread agreement that socialism is a failure, and capitalism a success."—Milton Friedman

that victory on one front is decisive or that victory is ever permanent. Today, the main road to serfdom is paved with green bricks rather than the red bricks of yesterday. No one, however, should be confused; all statist roads lead to the same dreary totalitarian end-state—and we are fast approaching the point of no return.

FRED L. SMITH JR. *is president of the Competitive Enterprise Institute.*

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- $3.7 billion was spent on environmental activities associated with our plants and operations around the country.
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Capitol Gain

What Republicans Will Do If They Win the Congress

Tod Lindberg

Suppose we wake up on the morning of Wednesday, November 9 this year and discover that the Republicans have won. Really won. Say, 40 seats or more in the House and seven or more in the Senate. Suppose, in other words, the 104th Congress of the United States has Republican majorities in both chambers. Then what? What difference would GOP control make?

This isn't a completely idle question. By one way of reckoning, opposition parties pick up an average of 18 House seats in the mid-term elections. And there are a number of reasons the GOP might be expected to outperform that average this November.

The GOP has done exceptionally well in by-elections since November 1992. When he took over as party chairman, Haley Barbour insisted that the Republican National Committee would focus on 1994 and the contests leading up to it, not on the presidential election in 1996. So far, from the Republican point of view, so good—a Senate seat in Texas, a House seat in Oklahoma, another in Kentucky, as well as a number of victories in state and local elections, including the New Jersey and Virginia governorships and the New York City and Los Angeles mayoralties. Democratic spin doctors have insisted that, all politics being local, it's a mistake to read any national trends into these results. Republicans, on the other hand, have suggested that the results reflect broader disenchantment with the president and traditional Democratic Party solutions to national problems.

The president is personally unpopular. President Clinton took office having won with 43 percent of the vote, which is hardly a majority, but is slightly higher than the percentage Richard Nixon garnered in 1968. Still, Clinton's approval ratings early in his term were unprecedentedly low, and they have remained low. Two major scandals, Whitewater and Troopergate, have yet to play out fully, with the potential for further erosion in his support. Moreover, the public reception to his major policy initiatives (his so-called $500 billion deficit reduction plan, health care) has formed a pattern: an initial burst of enthusiasm that relatively quickly dissipates, then mounting opposition. This is the mark of poor salesmanship or a poor product, maybe both. If all of this continues, the GOP has an opportunity to the extent that a local candidate can be portrayed as a Clinton surrogate.

Congress is unpopular. Polls indicate near-record levels of distrust, and support for term limits remains high (even if they are constitutionally problematic). The Politburo-like reelection percentages of the past, reflecting the advantages of incumbency, are gone. Even primary challenges are a problem for incumbents, not only because they sometimes succeed, but even when they fail: They can be expensive and they may draw blood, which can weaken a candidate in the general election. The 103rd Congress has 110 new members, a turnover of more than 25 percent. Turnover for the 104th Congress—owing to retirement, primary loss or a decision to seek other office—as of this writing already stands at 47.

Republicans have so far been unable to lay the nation's problems at the door of the Democratic leadership or the Democratic majority of Congress. Nor have they been successful blaming the dominance of one party for such congressional scandals as check-kiting and illegality at the House Post Office. Republicans had high hopes for a specifically anti-Democratic backlash, but it has failed to materialize in any significant way in the polls. What has taken hold, however, is the notion that a scandal-ridden Congress isn't properly dealing with the nation's problems. And even if all incumbent members of the House and Senate who are facing the voters this term feel its effects equally, that's a net loss for the current majority.

The freshman class is huge. As 1986 took its toll on the weaker members of the crop of GOP senators elected in the 1980 Reagan landslide, so may 1994 take its highest toll upon weaker representatives as well as those least adept at discerning and exploiting the advantages of incumbency. Again, even assuming this affects all freshmen equally, it hurts more Democrats than Republicans.

Republicans are running more candidates. You can't beat a horse with no horse, as the saying goes. The most striking results have been in the House, where Bill Paxon of New York has directed the efforts of the National Republican Congressional Committee. According to Federal Election Commission figures, the number of GOP challengers to incumbent Democrats rose from 117 in 1988 to 263 in 1994, while Democratic challenges to

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incumbent Republicans actually decreased from 140 to 136 in the same period. Perhaps Bill Clinton's example has been inspirational: When he began his run, it was against an incumbent whose approval rating was then in excess of 80 percent. Republicans are beginning to realize that the only case in which you truly haven't got a prayer is when you stay out of the race altogether.

There are more competitive Democratic seats than competitive Republican seats. The formula used by the respected Cook Political Report indicates that 72 House seats currently held by Democrats are competitive, whereas 32 GOP seats are. In other words, if Democrats and Republicans each manage to hold on to the same number of competitive seats, the result is a 40-seat swing to the GOP.

GIVEN A GOP CONGRESSIONAL MAJORITY, WE CAN EXPECT INTENSE ANGLING FOR THE INFORMAL POSITION OF REPUBLICAN "BIG KAHUNA."

Are all of these factors enough to produce GOP majorities? The one thing that's certain is that it is far safer on the cocktail party circuit to predict continued Democratic dominance. Still, something is new in GOP circles on the Hill this year. As never before in memory, Republicans are thinking about victory, imagining its possibilities and implications, planning, even, on what to do when it comes—if not now, then soon. And, of course, the first essential step in winning is wanting to win.

Legislative Blitzkrieg

Newt Gingrich, who will take over for Robert Michel as GOP House leader, has proposed putting together a plan for "the first 90 days"—a legislative blitzkrieg designed to define a distinctly Republican national agenda. The House Republican Conference, which is chaired by Representative Dick Armey, is working up the plan, which is slated for a September unveiling. If it comes together properly, it might become a quasi-platform for the 1994 elections, something Republican candidates can take to voters and say, "This is what you'll get if you elect a Republican Congress." If the message is right, it may achieve something that has been altogether elusive, namely "nationalizing" congressional elections. That hasn't really happened since 1980, and you'd have to go back 20 years, to the post-Watergate election of 1974, to find an instance of it in an off-year.

Meanwhile, behind the scenes, the Republican Conference has also been working on a plan for the awesome task of reconfiguring a Republican House. The issues are such matters as what kind of committee and subcommittee structure, what kind of staffing, what to do about entities under congressional control ranging from the Congressional Budget Office to the Capitol Police.

The staffing issues alone are mind-boggling. For example, Representative John Kasich's House Budget Committee minority staff produces every year, among many other things, a full-scale GOP substitute budget that can be "scored"—i.e., tested for the validity of its revenue and spending numbers according to the technical criteria of the Congressional Budget Office. The Budget Committee minority staff consists of all of 11 people. The Budget Committee majority staff numbers 41. Assuming no changes in overall congressional staffing levels—an assumption that will prove erroneous if Republicans make good on their rhetoric about bloated congressional staffs—and assuming current majority-minority staff ratios, Democrats will have the interesting experience of deciding which 30 people to let go, and Republicans will be looking for the same number of the best resumes they can find.

If you multiply this effect by the entire Congress, you are talking about A) a whole lot of Democratic unemployment claims and B) an explosion in demand for capable Republicans. (I would prefer a staffing formula devised, in the interest of fairness and fiscal probity, as follows: maintaining the current majority-minority staff ratios, but zero increase in total GOP positions. What could be more fiscally responsible? What could be more fair? And it would indeed be entertaining to see what a Democratic minority Budget Committee staff of three persons could produce.)

The planning is urgently needed, and no doubt, no matter how thoroughly it is done, there will a fair bit of turmoil. The next question is what, in terms of substantive policy and legislation, will come out of it.

First 90 Days

There are a number of issues that quickly come into play. First and most important, there is going to be a Democrat in the White House through 1996. That means two years of divided government. A GOP congressional majority in the 104th Congress will not have the luxury of a president of its own party whose agenda it can help shape and then ratify. The Republican majority will be on its own.

Consequently, we can expect a certain amount of intense angling for the informal position of Republican "Big Kahuna," and that in turn will be playing out against the backdrop of a coming presidential election in which no one is likely to have emerged as the clear front-runner, let alone to have the nomination sewn up. Inevitably, policy clashes will not be resolved solely on the merits. The additional factor of *who* is associated with *which* policy agenda will come into play. A vote for something may constitute a vote for someone. If you vote to enact elements of the "empowerment" agenda, such as restoring funds to privatize public housing, are you de facto furthering the presidential aspirations of Jack Kemp? Will Phil Gramm and Bob Dole offer competing policy prescriptions to go along with their competing presidential aspirations? A "First 90 Days" plan will help, but out of the tussle of intra-party ambitions, will a consensus legislative agenda emerge?

We also have to ask what, in substantive terms, it really means to be a Republican these days. If not around a particular leader, is there a core set of principles around

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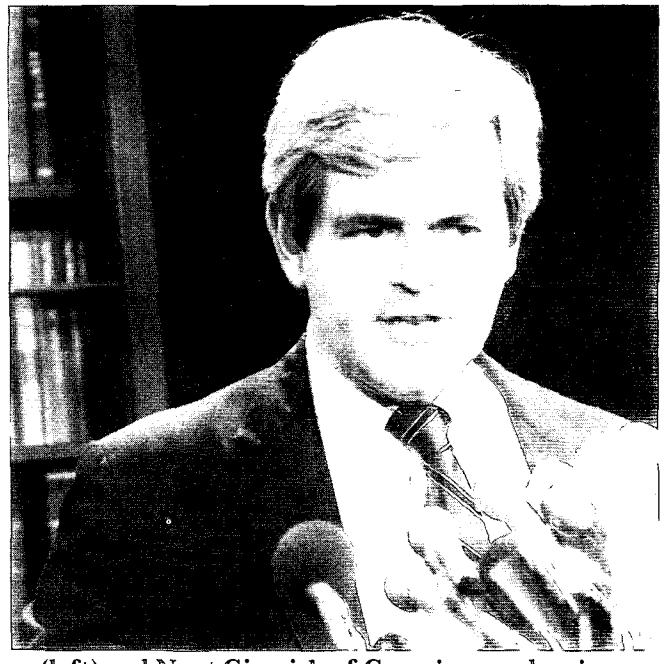

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The GOP House leadership, including Dick Armey of Texas (left) and Newt Gingrich of Georgia, are planning a "legislative blitzkrieg" to define a distinctly Republican national agenda during the first 90 days of the next congressional session.

which a legislative agenda will coalesce? The GOP House conference has been moving right over the years. And the moderate leader of the House, Robert Michel, will be gone. But the Senate's direction, if any, is less clear. Bob Dole's leadership style has been mercurial. No one could fault his performance during the 1993 budget fight. He seemed to be having the time of his life, and he did much to shake the party out of its post-election state of shell shock. There was no question at the time that he was the Republican leader, and he was also the nation's leading Republican. But that was the high-water mark of GOP unity and leadership in the Senate. The GOP has seemed almost balkanized since then, each member setting out on his own, a phenomenon that has magnified political differences within the party. Those differences can be fairly large, not only in the Senate but also in the House. The scenario under discussion here, already at the outer-edge of probability, is a narrow GOP victory—not, say, a 235-200 majority in the House and a 54-46 majority in the Senate. The only room for GOP defection will come from the ability to recruit Democrats to a GOP agenda. Let's say that's not much. What, if anything, can 218 of 218 Republicans agree on?

Finding the "Cockroaches"

Moreover, if Ronald Reagan had his "Boll Weevil" Democrats, Bill Clinton is apt to work to find his "Cockroach" Republicans, to coin a term. The executive branch has numerous rewards at its disposal and can be counted on to exploit them.

In this respect, however, Republican unanimity against President Clinton's 1993 budget plan (and the successful effort in the Senate to scuttle his economic "stimulus" package of pork barrel spending, achieved with no GOP defections) does count for something. In addition, conservative Democrats have been willing to stand up to their president and their leaders on some issues. They have done so, in some cases, at considerable personal cost. They would now face the prospect of reward from GOP leaders in Congress (who will not be without goodies) instead of merely punishment from their president and their congressional leaders.

Then there is the potential "X" factor of GOP unity. Call it Wellington at Waterloo—the historic dimension of the victory.

On their Best Behavior

The mere fact of Republican victory—the sense, perhaps, of the magnitude of national political realignment and the arrival of the Republican majority—would be occasion, one hopes, for Republicans to be on their best behavior. After 40 years in the wilderness, the occasion would demand a serious, unified alternative to the welfare-state liberalism that has been predominant in Congress throughout the period. I do not accept the consensus among the punditry that Republicans enjoyed de facto control of Congress for much of the first Reagan administration. Reagan did, to be sure, get significant legislation passed. But the notion that Reagan got everything he wanted—or everything he would have received had there been a Republican speaker—is plainly wrong. The administration did not lack political will to restrain federal spending and even to terminate some government programs. It lacked the votes to do so. The real test, of course, will come with the arrival of an actual Republican Congress and a Republican president. If that combination produces results no different from those achieved during the first Reagan administration, I won't be alone in my disappointment.

For purposes of argument, let's assume that Republicans do unite, having managed to agree on what will cure the things that ail the country. The next issue is political

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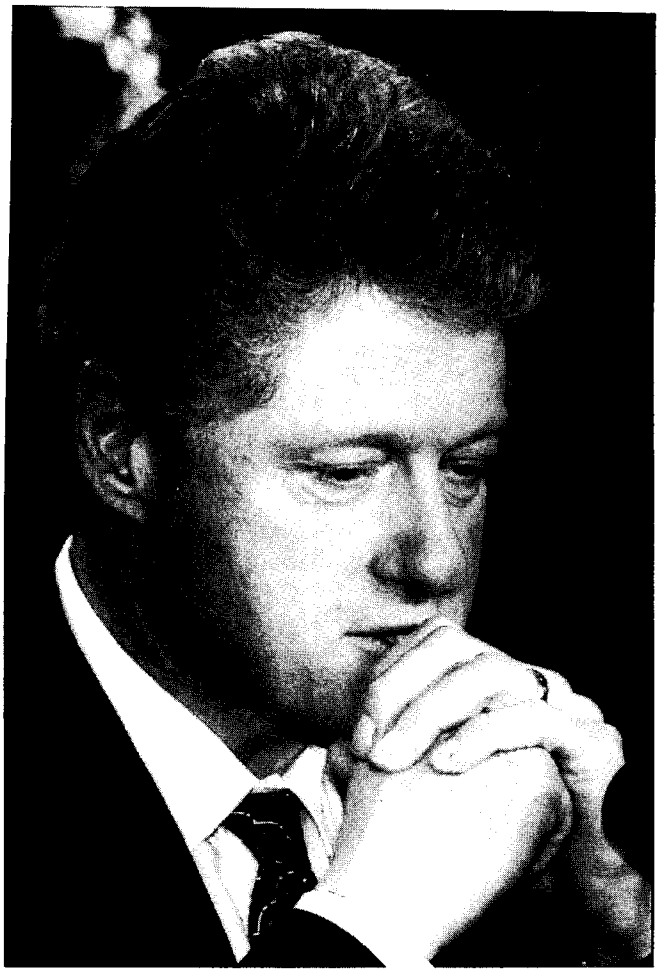

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President Bill Clinton's low approval ratings may prove helpful to GOP congressional candidates in the fall.

strategy. The White House belongs to their political enemy. Moreover, President Clinton has a well-established record of bending to the will of Congress—letting the congressional majority, through its leadership, make the final decisions on legislation, then signing the result and declaring victory for the White House. Should Republicans go to the trouble of saving the country so Bill Clinton can claim credit? On the other hand, would it not be irresponsible to hold the nation hostage to partisan political gain?

Take the case of departing Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell, arguably the most partisan member of the Senate. During the Bush administration, the president, virtually every known Republican, and, indeed, enough Democrats to form majorities in both the Senate and the House agreed that the economy would benefit from a cut in the tax rate on capital gains. Mitchell said no, stopping the effort cold. He cited "fairness," then the buzzword of choice for liberal Democrats. As to what Senator Mitchell thought the economic effects of a capital gains tax cut would be, the historical record is silent. To me, however, it is not the least inconceivable that Mitchell recognized the potential (though unfair) economic benefits. And he would not allow the economy to reap those benefits, particularly because the wrong people would gain the most, on George Bush's watch. The whole affair was actually just the most conspicuous instance of the Democratic stake in "gridlock."

Tit for tat, anyone? Revenge? The sentiment is surely present in numerous quarters of the congressional GOP. Doing the most (by their lights) that they can for the good of the country while preventing claims of success by the incumbent administration will require deft maneuvering.

With these chessboard political calculations in mind, it's time to ask what policy changes we can expect from a Republican Congress. In terms of how we live our lives and our society is ordered, what difference would GOP control really make?

"Egregiously Bad"

For starters, egregiously bad lawmaking, from the GOP point of view, will cease. As a minority party, Republicans in the 103rd Congress have been unable to derail much of the Democratic legislative agenda at all. The first, last, and only unequivocally clear win was the death of the "stimulus" package. One could argue that Republicans effectively targeted the Clinton health care reform plan, which is now dead. But this, I think, would be to mistake the Clinton administration agenda for the Democratic agenda. Democrats can be satisfied and may yet find themselves in a position to be satisfied with something very different from Ira Magaziner's folly—something calling itself "more moderate" but still an enormous expansion of government control over one-seventh of the U.S. economy. It is far too soon to declare any sort of GOP victory.

By "egregiously bad from the GOP point of view," I have in mind such things as Hatch Act reform (which allows federal workers to become more active in partisan politics, to the obvious benefit of the Democratic Party); the motor voter mandate (an outrageous intrusion into the rights of states to regulate voter registration requirements, and once again, legislation targeted at a group Democrats believe to be part of their natural constituency); the "assault" weapons ban (an exercise in symbolic politics that will accomplish nothing and, upon accomplishing nothing, will serve as the basis for further gun restrictions that will likewise accomplish nothing); locality pay for the federal workforce (a convenient way to disguise raises in a tight fiscal climate); the abortion clinic access bill (a suspension of free speech in the interest of providing a rare statutory—as opposed to judicial—acknowledgment of abortion rights); and family and medical leave (an employer mandate that is tone-deaf to the needs of the workplace and principally of benefit to those who are affluent enough to afford time off from work).

Those are things that have actually passed as of this writing. There's worse under active consideration now or still to come. A filibuster in the Senate blocking a bill that bans permanent replacement of striking workers—a major gift to Big Labor, perhaps even enough to reverse the long decline of trade unions in this country—was being held together with chewing gum and rubber bands at the end of May. The House had attached to its version of the crime bill the so-called Racial Justice Act, which would mean the end of the death penalty and also point the way toward non-capital sentencing based on race.

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And then, who knows? Some people at the National Rifle Association think a national one-gun-per-month limit—as well as a major squeeze on gun dealers—might be next on the minds of the anti-gun lobby. The Freedom of Choice Act probably can't ever pass, but the success of the clinic-access bill suggests that there will be further efforts to codify the pro-abortion agenda and silence the pro-life movement. Additional mandates on employers are sure to come; strapped for cash for programs of its own, Congress has found it expedient to make employers provide and pay for programs.

Dangerous VAT

The taxation agenda of the Democratic Party will remain incomplete so long as the United States lacks a value-added tax or national sales tax. A naked VAT probably could not pass even under current circumstances. I am not so sure, however, about a VAT accompanied by some tax cut. Consider a package—let's call it the "Middle Class and Family Tax Relief Act." The first and most heavily promoted provision is a tax cut in the form of a fairly large increase in personal and dependent allowances. Lawmakers will make a point of not mentioning that the allowance will no longer be indexed for inflation. In addition, there would be a VAT of a couple of pennies per dollar in the name of taxing consumption, encouraging savings and "paying for" something such as health care that people are thought to want. Finally, there would be a further expansion of the Earned Income Tax Credit to compensate for the VAT paid by poorer people.

Such a package would be a very dangerous combination. It would be enacted with the full expectation of most of those voting for it that the VAT rate would increase penny by penny over time, more than compensating for the increased value in the allowance, which would erode over time with inflation. It might be just the recipe for a major upward ratcheting—to levels in line with the sclerotic welfare states of Europe—of the percentage of gross domestic product consumed by the government. That, in turn, would enable government to extend its reach much farther and in new directions.

I will admit to a certain poverty of the imagination when it comes to thinking up things Congress might do. This is a problem quite widespread among conservatives. Along comes a provision in the crime bill that provides federal money for midnight basketball leagues—in other words, a program that will actually keep kids *away* from home and *on* the streets until three o'clock in the morning—and I say to myself, "You've got to be kidding." But, of course, they're not kidding, those members of Congress who take it upon themselves to legislate such things. They see the coercive power of the state not as an awesome thing to be wielded with humility and with reverence for the liberty of their fellow citizens, but as something properly used to enforce not just their ideas about social justice but their whims. Midnight basketball?

All of the nonsense and worse of this sort would stop under a majority Republican Congress. Even though there are some Republicans who have fetishes of their own along the lines of midnight basketball, the ability to indulge them is likely to be crushed by the preponderance of conservative opinion.

Though conservatives sometimes have their big-government bad days and their particular enthusiasms, generally speaking these are not shared and will be rooted out by mainstream Republican opinion, which is conservative. At a minimum, "conservative" means unwilling to march off in new directions under the banner of activist government.

A Positive Agenda

If the preceding is the negative agenda, what about the positive agenda? Again, political strategy and tactics are a consideration. Some have suggested a polarizing strategy in which the Democratic president is forced into the position of being the obstacle preventing Capitol Hill Republicans from doing things the American people want. Along these lines, Congress would pass viciously polarizing but popular legislation that President Clinton would have to veto. A friend who is likely to be a player in the next Republican administration merrily suggests something along the lines of "The $2,000 Per Child Tax Credit Mandatory School Prayer Act."

More likely, Republicans will want to do two things right away: Cut taxes and cut spending.

The first question is whether or not these things will be done together. The interest of the Clinton administration will be to sever them. Candidate Clinton promised a middle-class tax cut in the 1992 campaign, and the president almost certainly will push for one in the 104th Congress in time for his reelection bid, regardless of who is in charge. He might even be willing to pay for it with some combination of further tax increases on business or "the rich" and further paring in defense, if possible. But he will want to fight significant spending cuts in areas that affect his Democratic constituency.

If Ronald Reagan had his "Boll Weevil" Democrats, Bill Clinton is apt to find his "Cockroach" Republicans.

A Republican Congress would probably present him with a package in which tax relief is accompanied by offsetting cuts in domestic spending only, such that the result is "deficit neutral." This approach would be consistent with the rules of budgeting that are currently in place (rules that, in the longer run, Republicans want to change).

Republicans have actually become rather adept at playing the budget game by the Democrats' rules. The proof of this is in recent House GOP substitute budgets. The 1993 version provided the same $500 billion in "deficit reduction" over five years that the administration offered, but without any tax increases. In other words, it cut spending. And—most important of all—it was not just Republican say-so attesting to the GOP budget's legitimacy as a spending-cutter. To be ruled "in order" at all—i.e., to be eligible, in the judgment of the Demo-

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The recent indictment of House Ways and Means chairman Dan Rostenkowski underscored Americans' belief that a scandal-ridden Congress isn't properly dealing with the nation's problems.

cratic-leadership controlled Rules Committee, for a vote by the House as a true "substitute" for the Clinton bill—any bill had to pass the muster of the Congressional Budget Office. It had to be "scored," and the CBO has little patience for vague spending-cut formulations, unspecified caps in funding, and so on. The GOP substitute passed the CBO test last year.

The critical point is that Democrats, including those in the administration, have a long record of stated commitment to such principles. They would have a difficult time rejecting out of hand a Republican budget crafted in accordance with them. The 1994 version included a $500 tax credit per child for parents earning up to $200,000, which it fully "paid for" by offsetting reductions in spending. This year's budget received 165 votes, the most any GOP budget alternative has received since 1982.

The 1994 GOP budget is a likely model for a Republican-majority Congress. There will be a skirmish between deficit hawks and anti-tax hawks. The anti-deficit hawks will argue that until the budget deficit comes down, it's a mistake to decrease taxes (though they would make an exception for capital gains). But the anti-tax hawks will win hands down. They will do so first by agreeing to "pay for" every dollar in tax cuts with a dollar in spending cuts, second by pointing to the need to give the American economy a shot in the arm, and third by the persuasive argument that a failure to reduce taxes means acquiescence in "the biggest tax increase in history," namely President Clinton's.

The certain vehicle for a tax cut would be a per-child tax credit. An increase in the value of the dependent exemption for children would be a possible variation on this theme, but it's less likely for the simple reason that it is less visible to the taxpayer: There is something dramatic about money that comes directly off your tax bill once you get to the bottom of the form.

I wouldn't be surprised to see an increase in the value of the exemptions for self and spouse, accompanied with rhetoric about how inflation has eroded the exemption dramatically. If the value of the exemption had kept pace with inflation since the 1950s, it would be worth more than $8,000 today, rather than 1993's $2,350 (even less as the exemption is phased out at higher income levels). But whether or not that happens, the per-child credit is central. The idea of helping or encouraging or rewarding the family has appeal throughout the party. From pro-choice suburban women (to pick a hot-button group for campaign strategists) to pro-life southern evangelicals, everyone is aboard. There's no tricky math: At the GOP's proposed level for 1994, $500 a kid, a family with three children would have $1,500 more per year in its pocketbook. A difference of almost $29 a week in take-home pay is something people would notice.

I would be very surprised to see Republicans make an effort to bring the top tax rate down to what it was before the Clinton increase. That will probably have to wait for a Republican president conducting an overhaul of the system on the scale of the 1986 tax reform. Republicans feel vulnerable on the issue of "tax breaks for the wealthy." And although we have learned a lot more about Clinton family finances just before and during the decade of greed, there would still be major GOP fears of the Clinton counterattack on "fairness" grounds. (We're likely to see the $200,000 income cap for the per-child credit, as well, for the same reason.) The Democrats' gasoline tax increase of 1993 will stay, too, only because there are other taxes Republicans want more urgently to reduce.

A package of tax cuts fully "paid for" by spending cuts, thus in line with deficit targets set by the administration and congressional Democrats, will be a nightmare for the president—unless, of course, he decides to announce that this was his secret plan all along.

The spending-cut mechanisms that have been frustrated by the administration and the Democratic leader-

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ship would also have their day. The cuts proposed in the Penny-Kasich bill will be made. The "A to Z" proposal, whereby each member of Congress gets to offer a particular spending cut for an up or down vote by the House as a whole, will be employed. (It would be nice if the Senate agreed to vote up or down on the whole ensuing package, without modification, but that might be hoping for too much.) And I think we could expect a balanced budget amendment.

A Nice Ring...

How much the spending cuts would total is hard to say. Republicans would surely present a bigger package of specific cuts than any the Clinton administration has proposed. I'm quite confident a $500 billion package over five years could be put together without much difficulty. (To my ears, however, "trillion" has a nice ring to it.) Big numbers necessarily entail entitlement reform, though. Pursuing that against the wishes of a hostile White House would be very difficult.

Republicans (and for that matter, some conservative Democrats) are also going to want to change some of the rules governing the budget process. The first rule to go will be the application of the Congressional Budget Office's (CBO's) static analysis to capital gains taxes, in particular. The CBO scores a cut in the tax rate on capital gains as a revenue loser. Republicans are convinced that a cut in the rate will raise money, because a lower rate will result in more capital formation. Indexing the basis of the asset for inflation would have a similar effect—and it sidesteps a "fairness" issue. Republicans can say that there is nothing fair about paying taxes on "gains" that merely reflect inflation. I think they will insist on having their indexation at once, and without "paying for" it. A rate cut would probably be a second phase.

A complete rewriting of the rules of budgeting would take some time. I would expect a major effort to end the use of the so-called "current-services baseline" for budget projections. The principle here is to take everything you are doing now under current law and regulations and to assume you will be doing it in the future. Then you compute how much it will cost to do that in future years, based on assumptions made about economic growth, inflation and so on. That's the baseline, and it's usually going up, of course. The trick is that a "spending cut" in Washington is a cut against the baseline, not a reduction in outlays below their level this year. Thus spending actually increases as it is being "cut." In this Congress, Kasich and fiscally conservative Democrats Timothy Penny and Charles Stenholm have introduced legislation that will do away with such baselines as the basis for budgeting. That's the sort of reform a Republican-led Congress would pass quickly, with bipartisan support.

Bottoms Up

Once we get past taxes and spending, the next area in which action is likely to be swift is defense. The consensus view among Republicans is that the Clinton administration is cutting too much, too fast, leaving the United States underprepared for its necessary role in a world that is by no means so benevolent as some hoped immediately after the fall of the Soviet Union.

The administration conducted its "Bottom-Up Review" of defense needs to great fanfare. Unfortunately, however, even the "Bottom-Up Review" has not been fully funded, such has been the effort to squeeze the Pentagon. The GOP point of departure will be insistence on full funding for the capabilities outlined, and it's hard to imagine how the president could fail to agree. But the GOP will want to go further.

In its first budget, the Clinton administration tried to portray itself as cutting defense not radically but modestly. To do so, the administration started with force and spending levels for the next five years that President Bush and Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Colin Powell had agreed to. Then it cut from there. But the Bush-Powell goals were already optimistic about the savings that could be achieved while maintaining readiness. Cutting beyond that point may constitute major recklessness, in the view of many Republicans, raising the specter of the "hollow army" of the late 1970s. Republicans will probably move quickly in the direction of the force structure and corresponding spending levels to which Bush and Powell agreed. The White House will be hard pressed to say no.

Beyond taxes, spending, and defense, the picture gets murkier. It would be nice to be able to predict that once they were in power in Congress, Republicans would rally around a truly market-oriented health-care plan. However, the Republicans have not been able to do that even in opposition. If nothing passes prior to this year's election and the GOP wins, at a minimum the sense of urgency to get something done at once is dead. That is not nothing.

As to the other major item on the domestic agenda, welfare, some aspects of reform will be easier than others. A major overhaul of the Supplemental Security Income boondoggle would be fairly easy to achieve. Doing something serious about Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) would be much tougher, especially in the face of a White House that still has a veto at its disposal. Mainstream conservative opinion wants to end welfare, period, on the grounds that its expansion has wreaked havoc on the lives of participants, creating an underclass and destroying whole city neighborhoods. But ending AFDC, or radically circumscribing it, would be an extraordinary political task.

Probably some kind of compromise is possible. Again, though at a minimum, the Clintonian end-of-welfare-as-we-know-it, start of massive-government-jobs-program-as-we-know-it is dead.

Winning With a Loser

Congress' responsibilities do not end with legislating. The Senate has its "advice and consent" function, and both bodies have their oversight responsibilities.

"Advice and consent" has been a mixed bag in the 103rd Congress. In the early going, there was simply no Republican resistance in the Senate to President Clinton's nominees whatsoever. That changed, up to a point, with Clinton's first nominee for attorney general, Zoe Baird. Interestingly enough, though, the senator who gave her the hardest time at her confirmation hearing was not a Republican, but Judiciary Committee Chairman Joseph Biden. Serious Republican opposition actually

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began in the House, whence Newt Gingrich threw a grenade. Then the phone calls and letters about illegal aliens and not paying taxes started pouring in, and Republicans realized they had a winner in making Baird a loser. Democrats, too, who might have allowed themselves to be satisfied with Baird's explanation and repentance at her hearings, let the prevailing winds carry them away from her.

It was clear, however, that Republican senators were not going to engage themselves in trench warfare against Clinton nominees. Their staffs, in some cases, were doing decent opposition research, as were outside groups. And

I ADMIT TO A CERTAIN POVERTY OF THE IMAGINATION WHEN IT COMES TO THINKING UP THINGS CONGRESS MIGHT DO. THIS IS A PROBLEM QUITE WIDESPREAD AMONG CONSERVATIVES.

the senators themselves would pick a case here and there with which to concern themselves. By itself, this was enough to induce some caution on the part of a White House that took office utterly deaf to its own radicalism. But it never coalesced into unified GOP opposition.

I don't think the Republican 104th Congress would necessarily be much different. Part of the problem is actually principle: Namely, a widely held view among Republicans that presidents deserve the people they want in their administrations in the absence of clear deficiencies of qualification or character. An increase in raw political power that would come with a Senate majority would change some things, but not everything. What I think is most likely is that the White House will be more cautious in choosing people in an effort to avoid fights. Stephen Breyer's nomination to the Supreme Court is possibly an early example.

If the record suggests that presidential appointments will not change dramatically in the Republican 104th Congress, the same record suggests that oversight is an entirely different matter. For its first two years, the Clinton administration has essentially escaped serious congressional scrutiny, thanks to the efforts of the Democratic leadership to shut down oversight.

Naked Politics

The nakedness of the politics has not gone unnoticed by Republicans. Precedent after precedent on oversight has been discarded. Serious ethical problems bordering and sometimes crossing over into illegality, at the White House and in Cabinet departments and agencies, have gone uninvestigated—from Whitewater to Travelgate to the search of Bush administration personnel files to dozens of other scandals about which we know little. William Clinger, the ranking Republican on the House Government Operations Committee, has noted that his committee conducted 40 percent fewer oversight hearings in the first year of the Clinton administration than during the first year of the Bush administration.

Democrats have attempted to paint Republican efforts to investigate as partisan sniping in an effort to derail the administration's agenda. But they have yet to get a taste of anything like the nastiness in the name of oversight that Democrats inflicted on the Reagan and Bush administrations.

In a Republican 104th Congress, they surely will. What has been most interesting to observe is the emergence of the mild-mannered, moderate James Leach, the ranking member of the House Banking Committee, as Whitewater attack dog. Clinger, too, has no reputation for right-wing bomb-throwing, but he is fighting mad. Hell hath no fury like a moderate Republican in pursuit of his oversight responsibilities.

Beyond the obvious scandals, it would be useful to see oversight and other hearings aimed at substantive matters of executive branch action. Rather than John Dingell's unprecedented call for environmental crimes prosecutors at the Justice Department to appear before his committee to answer for the quality of their prosecutions, we might see hearings at which Attorney General Janet Reno and others are grilled on the political motives of environmental crimes prosecution.

One thing that I think will not happen, however, is full-scale retaliation for the Democratic abuses. I have asked Clinger about this directly. He has said he could not bring himself to place a Democratic minority in the same position in which he now finds himself.

Get Serious

Congressional Republicans are starting to take themselves more seriously. I have mentioned the elusive task of "nationalizing" congressional elections—convincing voters that a vote for a member of a particular party in their own district can have national significance. The past two Republican presidents have been criticized for their failure to sell a message that they needed more Republicans in Congress to deliver on their agenda. Maybe such failures are common simply because of the relationship of the presidency and the Congress. To be deemed successful, a president must be seen to be advancing an agenda, leading the nation, regardless of who runs Congress. Or at least that's how the presidents have seen it.

It may be up to Republicans in Congress and would-be Republicans in Congress themselves to "nationalize" congressional elections—to say, "Here is where we stand and here is what I will help do if you elect me."

Republicans, after all, believe that their ideas about the size of government and its role in Americans' lives, about taxation, about the national defense, and so on, are more in accordance with the views of the American people than their competitors' ideas. They can even cite poll data to "prove" it.

When it comes to wielding political power in this country, however, those polls don't matter much. What matters is what happens in congressional elections every other year. Convince yourselves of that, and then start convincing the people, and you may be getting somewhere. ☎

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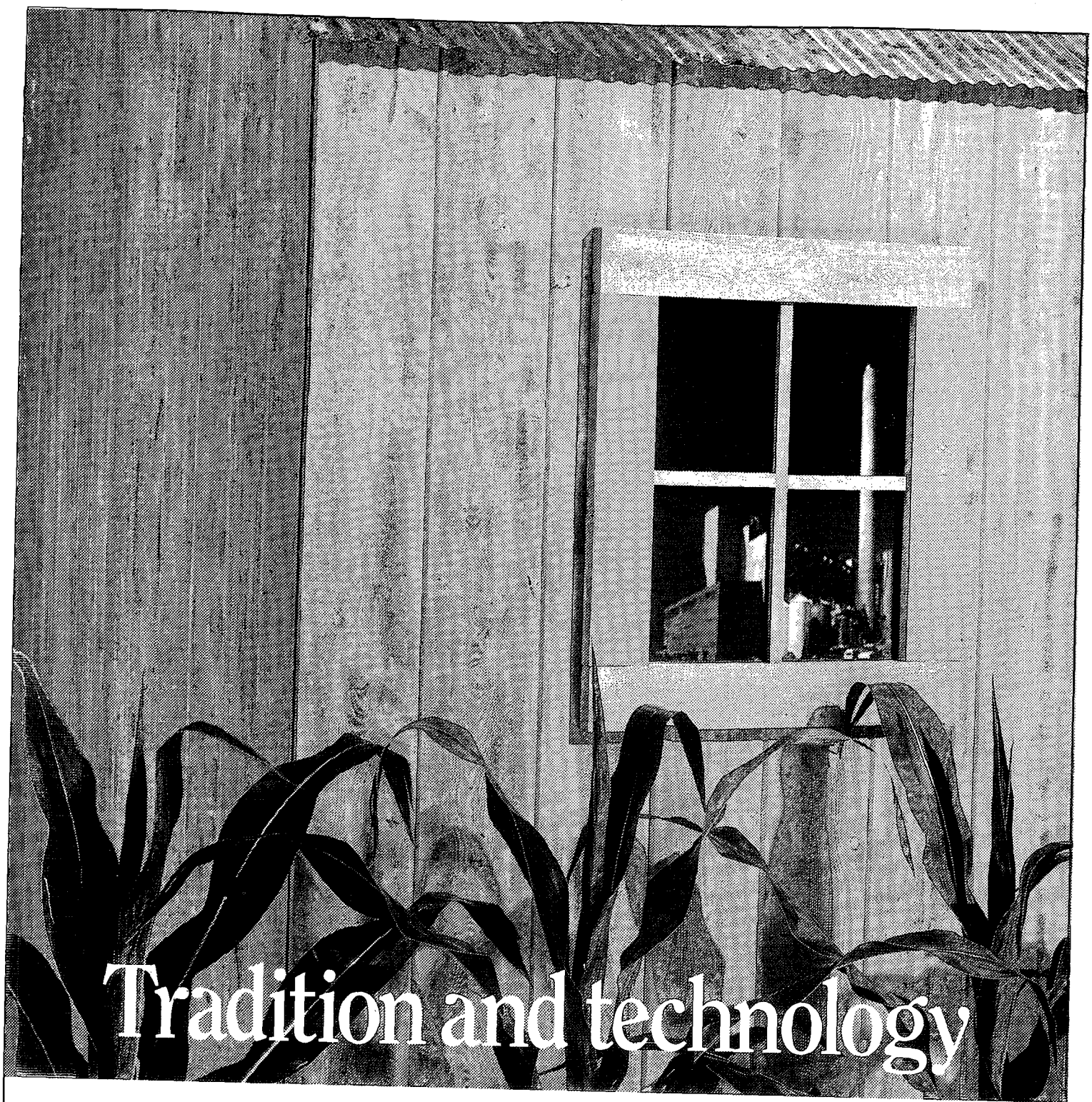

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By The People

The Old Values of the New Citizenship

William A. Schambra

Out of the ashes of George Bush's defeat in 1992 has come a bold new strategy for American conservatism. The strategy, called the "new citizenship," builds on the scholarship of Robert Nisbet, Michael Novak, Peter Berger, Richard John Neuhaus, and other leading conservative thinkers. Its goal is the reconstruction of civil society, the return of America to the self-governing republic described by Alexis de Tocqueville and envisioned by the Founding Fathers. Its social vision contrasts sharply with the similar-sounding but profoundly different rhetoric of "national community" espoused by President Clinton.

Michael Joyce, president of the Bradley Foundation, has been the principal architect of this new strategy. Pointing to the signs of massive discontent among American voters toward our major governing institutions—the immense popularity of Ross Perot's radical, populist call to return government directly to the people, the success of term limits and tax-and-spending limits in referendums across the nation, exit polls showing widespread skepticism about government's intentions and programs—Joyce has argued that "Americans are sick and tired of being told they're incompetent to run their own affairs." Speaking before The Heritage Foundation in December 1992, Joyce articulated his vision for conservatism in the next generation:

> Americans are eager to seize control of their daily lives again—to make critical life choices for themselves, based on their own common sense and folk wisdom—to assume once again the status of proud, independent, self-governing citizens intended for them by the Founders.

Americans, he went on, are "sick and tired of being treated as helpless, pathetic victims of social forces that are beyond their understanding or control...of being treated as passive clients by arrogant, paternalistic social scientists, therapists, professionals, and bureaucrats." Under the "new citizenship" strategy, conservatives would empower families to take back their schools and neighborhoods, to make key decisions about education and health care and the character of their communities.

Two themes are emerging from the new citizenship concept. A "resistance" theme calls for rolling back the incursions of the therapeutic state into the everyday lives of Americans by challenging the political hegemony of the "helping" and "caring" professions and bureaucracies. This requires dramatizing their status as entrenched, corrupt special interests more concerned about advancing narrow ideological agendas and protecting political prerogatives than about serving the public.

Common Sense, Everyday Wisdom

Resistance also means challenging the cultural hegemony of "expert" knowledge on behalf of the common sense, everyday wisdom of the average American. It includes a strong critique of the new moral code of our elites—in particular, the central place accorded untrammeled self-expression—on behalf of traditional values like self-discipline, personal responsibility, and moral integrity.

The larger and more ambitious "restoration" theme calls for nothing less than revitalizing the institutions and values of American civil society. Through our vast, pluralistic network of civic institutions, as Tocqueville noted many years before, Americans had always been able to harness private energies to countless public tasks. At the same time, civic associations and groupings helped sustain order and public morality, and generally leaven the materialistic individualism of commercial democracy with an inclination toward broader citizenly duties. The traditional, local institutions of civil society—families, schools, churches, neighborhoods, and other "mediating structures"—had allowed the exercise of genuine citizenship and cultivated character for the next generation.

That the institutions and values of civil society are deeply imperiled and desperately in need of resuscitation today is a conviction widely shared across the political spectrum. William Bennett notes that "America's moral capital" has been "depleted by the failure of our character-forming institutions to carry out their time-honored tasks." The late Christopher Lasch similarly lamented "the unraveling of the social fabric." The "communitarian movement" has summoned a bipartisan cast of scholars and policy makers to explore the possibility of restoring

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timbre to the enfeebled "moral voice" of our community institutions. Apparently inspired by the communitarians, even President Clinton is in on the act. As he put it in the 1994 State of the Union Address, "Our problems go way beyond the reach of government. They're rooted in the loss of values, in the disappearance of work and the breakdown of families and communities." We cannot renew the nation, he noted, until "all of us are willing to join churches and other good citizens...who are saving kids, adopting schools, making streets safer."

The consequences of civil society's decline are evident throughout our daily life, in soaring rates of crime, divorce, illegitimacy, neighborhood deterioration, welfare dependency, chemical addiction, suicide, and virtually every other indicator of pathology. While these symptoms are most vividly on display in the inner city, they are rapidly taking root in suburban culture as well.

The Acids of Modernity

In his classic, *The Quest for Community*, Robert Nisbet describes the powerful forces of modernity complicit in this civic and moral unraveling, with assaults on civil society coming both from below and from above. From below, the authority of family, church, neighborhood, and school is quietly eroded by the proliferation of individual rights, especially the right of self-expression—that is, expression of self with utter disregard for civil society. From above, civil institutions are pressured to surrender authority and function to the professional elites of the centralized, bureaucratic state. Today's Boy Scout troops, for instance, may as well turn themselves over to the federal courts for management, given the relentless legal assault on their morally rigorous organizational principles by champions of the rights of "alternative lifestyles." Caught in a pincers movement between individual rights and the central state, Nisbet notes, the intermediate associations of civil society languish.

However, it would be an error to suppose that the erosion of civil society is somehow a natural or inevitable consequence of modern progress. Rather, the central project of the modern progressive liberal state is to eradicate civil society, and to transfer its functions to government. It is doing so, ironically, in the name of restoring community—now understood as *national* community.

The National Community

The idea of national community sprang from the minds of Herbert Croly, Walter Lippmann, John Dewey, and others at the turn of the century, and was introduced into American politics by Theodore Roosevelt's enunciation of a "new nationalism" in 1910. It is progressive liberalism's grand intellectual attempt to reconcile the centralized, bureaucratic, therapeutic state with the idea of public-spirited citizenship and community.

According to the progressive vision, various forces of modernity—industrialization, urbanization, advanced communications and transportation—had forever shattered the boundaries of America's traditional, self-contained, village-centered way of life. But those same forces—when gathered into the guiding hand of the centralized bureaucratic state—now permitted a degree of rationalized, efficient management of human affairs

New Jersey Newsphotos

Today's Boy Scouts may as well turn themselves over to the courts for management, given the relentless legal assault on their morally rigorous principles.

unimaginable in the earlier epoch of diverse local communities. In Dewey's famous formulation, it was now possible and necessary to convert the "Great Society created by steam and electricity" into the "Great Community."

Humanizing and softening the harsh, mechanistic aspects of this new national leviathan was the president, standing at the center and articulating a vision of grand, national purpose—which in turn bestowed legitimacy upon the new national state. That vision would summon citizens out of merely self-interested, materialistic pursuits, into public-spirited, civic-minded devotion to a common national idea and a unifying national state. (If this sounds far-fetched, recall Walter Mondale's insistence in the 1984 campaign that the president's preeminent task was to "make us a community and keep us a community.")

If the devotion to national purpose and state should falter, the president could reach into his quiver of national "wars" and "crises," which would serve to remind Americans of the need to pull together as one in the face of perilous conditions or threats to national integrity. Thus would Lyndon Johnson describe his program as a "*war* on poverty" precisely because the "military image" would "sound a call to arms which will stir people...to lend their talents to a massive effort to eradicate the evil." Thus would Jimmy Carter declare the "energy crisis" to be the "moral equivalent of war," which would "give us all a sense of unity and purpose again."

According to the progressives, this new idea of national community—coherent, efficient, rational, yet infused with the warm glow of purpose and belonging—was vastly preferable to the chaotic jumble of divergent civic insti-

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tutions and local loyalties, which the state would now proceed to eliminate or absorb.

The theme of national community—an old chestnut of Democratic presidential candidates throughout this century—has already found an honored place in Clinton rhetoric. The "New Covenant" speech at Georgetown University in October, 1991, laying out the larger message of the Clinton campaign, was tellingly sub-titled "Responsibility and Rebuilding the American Community." Clinton complained that "there's a hole in our politics where a sense of common purpose used to be," and called for a "New Covenant" to "restore a sense of community to this great nation." Again and again, he has returned to this vision of a renewed national family or community, sharply posing its demands for national service and public-mindedness to the "gilded age" of the 1980s, when "greed, selfishness, irresponsibility, excess, and neglect" prevailed.

BILL CLINTON SPEAKS THE LANGUAGE OF CIVIL REVIVAL WHILE PURSUING THE POLICY OF GOVERNMENT REVIVAL.

In light of this larger project, one appreciates all the more Clinton's deft deployment of Oprah-style media forms to cultivate a warm, caring, nurturing, "feel your pain," family atmosphere among a sprawling population of 250 million. That there suddenly should be a great national "crisis" in health care requiring—what else?—a massive extension of government power is a page right out of liberalism's dog-eared playbook.

Moreover, the national community ideal offers a facile, rhetorical bridge over the chasm between "new Democrat" supporters who genuinely yearn for a revitalization of civic life, and "old Democrats" who prefer the further expansion of government's reach. It permits Clinton to speak the language of civic revival, while pursuing the policy of government revival.

If the national community idea is a dead end, however, how are we to go about resuscitating civil society? The typical response—even from many conservatives—is to fiddle with the dials of public policy, in the vain hope that some sort of presidential initiative or government program might restart our nation's civic processes. As Commonwealth Foundation President Don Eberly points out, this is akin to believing that the "trees move the wind."

False Starts

Unhappily, the past three Republican administrations have left a dismal record in this regard. In the mid-1970s, Peter Berger and Richard John Neuhaus were well along with their work on the "mediating structures" paradigm—a clear predecessor of the new citizenship. And then the Ford administration recognized the political potency of the concept and seized upon it, seeking to capture its spirit in a new Office of Public Liaison within the White House. The office was to "reach out" to neighborhoods, churches, voluntary groups, and so forth through a nationwide series of presidential "town meetings." Almost instantly, of course, the office became a mere retail outlet for selling presidential initiatives to special interest groups.

A similar fate awaited similar ideas during the 1980s. After boldly calling for "an end to giantism, for a return to the human scale...the scale of the local fraternal lodge, the church organization, the block club, the farm bureau," President Reagan could manage little more than the "Task Force on Private Sector Initiatives." Filled with liberal foundation officers and well-intentioned but naive corporate CEOs, the task force quickly bogged down in pointless debates about whether or not corporations should be expected to foot the bill for welfare state programs. As Reagan's ACTION director Tom Pauken put it, task force members seemed to believe the mission was to "change one set of bureaucrats for another and say we've accomplished something just because they're off the federal payroll." A genuine return to local citizen democracy was never on the agenda.

Likewise, after grandly proclaiming his vision of America as a "nation of communities, of thousands of ethnic, religious, social, business, labor union, neighborhood, regional, and other organizations, all of them varied, voluntary, and unique," President Bush could only come up with the "points of light" initiative, which passed out hundreds of daily awards to worthy volunteer groups, but otherwise had nothing to say about the broader transformation of public policy toward a genuine, community-oriented basis.

The Limits of Public Policy

These false starts toward civic revival should lead us to be considerably more modest in our expectations of policy. To be sure, there are some policies that could help promote localism and civic renewal—such as offering unrestricted education vouchers, restoring family income by increasing the tax deduction for children, and toughening laws concerning child support and divorce. But most useful measures in the public policy realm involve shrinking that realm itself, by diminishing the reach of the therapeutic state and its debilitating effects on private institutions.

Even when public policy approaches the civic realm with the best of intentions, it more often than not only makes things worse. As Nathan Glazer pointed out long ago in *The Limits of Social Policy*, when government moves aggressively into the civic arena to shore up faltering institutions, their authority is only further undermined, since their functions seem to gravitate inexorably into government hands. Again and again—whether its child care, foster care, adoption, homes for unwed mothers, resettlement of refugees, or disaster relief—the appearance of even well-intentioned federal assistance inevitably signals the retreat of civic institutions, and the worsening of problems they previously ameliorated.

Too often in the past, conservatives have made this essential point about the limits of public policy, concluded that "it's up to civil society" to address our social problems—and then walked away. The implicit assumption seemed to be that traditional institutions were basi-

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cally healthy, needing only to be relieved of federal ministrations to resume their natural roles. This simply trivializes the devastating consequences of excessive government that conservatives themselves so ably document.

For conservatives, "it's up to civil society" should not be the conclusion of inquiry, but the beginning. Indeed, the central questions for conservatism at this moment in its history should be: How can we *recreate* civil society where it has collapsed, retreated, or never formed? And most important, how can we do so on the terms of civil society itself—that is, relying chiefly on resources available within the private sector, rather than on the problematic instrument of public policy?

If excessive conservative optimism about the resilience of civil society is one way to evade this question, excessive pessimism is another, more popular way. Many conservatives understand civic devastation to be vast—and irreparable. A minor industry has sprung up around detailing the decline and seemingly permanent disappearance of our most important civic institutions. Some conservatives go so far as to suggest that we should in essence dig moats around the remaining Midwestern towns and Southern villages where community virtues still prevail, and let the rest of the nation stew in modernity's corrosive juices.

Chas Geer

William Bennett: "America's moral capital has been depleted by the failure of our character-forming institutions to carry out their time-honored tasks."

Leaving aside other problems with this approach, let's just say that there is little reason to be so pessimistic. After all, Tocqueville was one of the first to ponder the destruction modern forces would visit on traditional institutions—over a century and a half ago. Indeed, his purpose in writing *Democracy in America* was to warn about the impending storm of modernity—to tell us that the old, established institutions of civil society would soon be borne away by the cyclonic winds of modern individualism and the centralized state.

A Genius for Association

In America, however, he witnessed the remarkable spectacle of unrelated individuals—as he put it, "people having different languages, beliefs, opinions...without roots, without memories, without prejudices, without routines, without common ideas"—coming together to create wholly new forms of civil institutions, in the very teeth of the modern storm. The impulse toward association—the yearning for genuine citizenship within civil society—is not so easy to destroy, he seemed to suggest.

Michael Novak similarly notes that we Americans are, indeed, disabled by history and circumstance from living in the genuine, rooted, tradition-bound *communities* that characterized the Old World of our ancestors. (For that we should not mourn, he adds, given the stultifying parochialism of the European village.) We are, however, capable of forming *associations*, as Tocqueville noted, which are none the less strong, resilient and vital for their being entirely voluntary. In short, the peculiar genius of Americans, Tocqueville and Novak agree, is the ability to form modern associations that are every bit as strong, and far freer, than traditional communities.

The American genius for association is evident throughout American history, perhaps most strikingly during the late nineteenth century. Accelerating industrialization and urbanization were drawing thousands of young men out of the tightly disciplined environments of village and family into the chaotic anonymity of the city.

James Q. Wilson notes that in the face of mounting social disorder and drunkenness, American society launched a massive campaign to construct an entirely new set of civic and character-forming agencies, including Sunday schools, religious revivals, YMCAs and other fraternal societies, and temperance groups. The result, he suggests, was a highly successful—if entirely informal and non-governmental—effort to "protect the character-building role of families or to supply substitutes for familial influence at a time of growing personal liberty and rapid social change."

The Parenthood Factor

Turning from theory and history to the contemporary climate, additional reasons for optimism about the resuscitation of civil society come to view. For even in the midst of the community-eroding forces of modernity, other powerful impulses are compelling heretofore isolated individuals to reengage with or recreate civic institutions. Parenthood is one such potent motivation.

Time and again, individuals who have abandoned themselves to disorganized lives or passive dependence on the state are suddenly galvanized into civic activity when they become parents, and realize that their children face an identically bleak future unless they take dramatic action. The sight of their children walking to school

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The Bettmann Archive

A Salvation Army bread line during the Depression. Americans today look to government to provide for them rather than to the traditional institutions of family, church, and community.

through the litter of IV needles and the clusters of drug dealers, or the thought of their daughter growing up permanently locked in welfare dependency, is simply unbearable. They may put up with any amount of abuse in their own lives, but as parents their cry becomes "not with my children, you don't."

The central goal for such parents is the recreation of a safe, orderly, structured, neighborhood environment for their children—one in which they are physically safe, emotionally and spiritually nurtured, and intellectually and morally instructed. Parents seek to reestablish the web of institutional supports that express, reinforce, and pass on to their children the wisdom and moral discipline necessary for a fruitful life, with family, church, school, and neighborhood all reflecting certain common ethical themes.

Coherent Communities

Former Secretary of Health and Human Services Louis Sullivan made the recreation of such coherent communities the centerpiece of his tenure in office. As he said on numerous occasions:

> The neighborhoods in Atlanta and Blakely, Georgia where I grew up were by no means rich materially, but they *were* genuine *communities*—bound together in joy and sorrow, sharing our benefits and burdens as well as our celebrations, committed to common values and principles. I was not just the child of my father and mother—I was in fact a child of the entire neighborhood.

The interlocking institutions of that neighborhood, he noted, provided overlapping and mutually reinforcing sources of discipline. "Through that discipline," he continued, "I learned certain *values*—values reinforced at every turn by my family, neighbors, church, and school—values like self-esteem, self-discipline, perseverance, the desire to learn, personal responsibility, and service to others." Only by restoring the neighborhood's web of institutions supporting parental authority could the problems of the inner city be met, Sullivan insisted.

The Fuel of Faith

This yearning for community applies equally to the urban and suburban middle class. Many professional couples for the first time are being spurred by parenthood to begin working within churches, neighborhoods, Little League teams, and a host other groups and institutions.

In a recent *New York Times* interview, sociologist Wade Clark Roof suggested this was true of baby boomer parents in particular: "In an era of enormous fragmentation, parents are expressing concern about the moral and religious socialization of their children." And so they are turning toward church and community to create an orderly moral universe. As Irving Kristol notes, in the face of "the single most important question that adults face"—how shall we raise our children?—modern parents suddenly drop the trendy project of personal liberation, and begin to focus instead on the restoration of social order.

Kristol predicts that the growing urgency of this question for millions of new parents will help fuel a major religious revival across the land. Without a doubt, churches, synagogues, and other religious institutions will play a central role in civic regeneration—particularly in the inner city. Over the years he has worked with neighborhood groups, Bob Woodson has found that at the heart of the most successful—those that genuinely change individual lives, as well as material surroundings—is an explicit call for personal spiritual transformation.

In many inner-city neighborhoods, the church is one of the only institutions of civil society left. Many congregations are taking the lead in securing better housing and improved city services, providing drug and alcohol rehabilitation, job training, and family support, and opening small business opportunities—often inspired and sustained by an unwavering spiritual commitment. In Glenn Loury's words, "The reports of successful efforts at reconstruction in ghetto communities invariably reveal a religious institution, or a set of devout believers, at the center of the effort."

In a *Wall Street Journal* op-ed called "God and the Ghetto," Mr. Loury spelled out the need in the inner city

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to revive the "agencies of moral and cultural development" that teach individuals "their duties to themselves, their obligations to each other, and their responsibilities before God." He notes:

> The family and the church are primary among these. These institutions have too often broken down in the inner city.... Yet these are the natural sources of legitimate moral teaching—indeed, the only sources. If those institutions are not restored, the behavioral problems of the ghetto will not be overcome.

Evicting the Bureaucrats

While such efforts must proceed largely without "benefit" of public policy, a certain degree of political involvement will nonetheless be thrust upon "new citizenship" efforts. For bureaucratic elites will need to be evicted from regions of civil society over which they currently exercise dominion, and their furious counterassaults repelled.

Certainly the struggle over education reform at the state level suggests the outlines of a new, grassroots political activism that will emerge as the new citizenship expands. Newly energized parents are striving to reclaim authority over schools from entrenched education bureaucracies. Their primary goal is to reestablish the schools as stable, structured, demanding learning environments, reflecting—rather than subverting—the moral commitments of the family. Other education-related battles are being fought over condom distribution, outcomes-based education, "rainbow curricula," and so forth—all involving parents seeking to preserve or reestablish a morally sustaining atmosphere for their children.

Similar battles against government elites are underway elsewhere: Families in public housing trying to rebuild community life are confronting legal obstacles to fighting crime and becoming economically self-sufficient; entrepreneurs struggle to establish small businesses in the face of oppressive regulation.

In each of these instances, the project of civic renewal, no matter how intently apolitical initially, nonetheless comes to require explicit political engagement. Local citizen uprisings—often isolated, ill-equipped, and vulnerable—are in desperate need of strategic advice and support. This includes donations of time and money, support for research, and the larger project of civic education, with the dimensions of the citizens' struggle against the elites captured in vivid, accessible, and compelling stories and images. For the interests holding stakes in the therapeutic state will draw without stint on their immense reserves of wealth and power to suppress challenges to their prerogatives—as the NEA's response to parental choice has made clear.

The feisty populism of the new citizenship will not be welcomed by all those traditionally found under the conservative tent. Certainly the substance, to say nothing of the style, of the new citizenship will be somewhat off-putting to the old-line, country-club Republicans, who came to dominate the upper reaches of the last administration, and who winced at the Houston Convention's foray into "family values." For them, talk about full-scale assaults on ruling cultural elites will be vaguely menacing, and earnest discussion of restoring the spiritual and moral vitality of the inner city will seem, well, vulgar.

Nonetheless, a new citizenship seriously committed to the reconstruction of civil society will have a great deal more to say to all American parents, of whatever income status. It will also have a great deal more to say to lower-income groups and minorities, for they suffer most acutely when civil society collapses, and would benefit most substantially from its resuscitation. The project to restore civil society is a bridge over one of the most troubling chasms in American society today—between conservatives and the inner city. At last it would be possible for conservatives honestly to say that they were responding to Loury's eloquent plea:

THE CENTRAL QUESTION FOR CONSERVATISM SHOULD BE: HOW CAN WE RECREATE CIVIL SOCIETY WHERE IT HAS COLLAPSED, RETREATED, OR NEVER FORMED?

> 'Those people' languishing in the drug-infested, economically depressed, crime-ridden central cities—those people are Americans; they are created, like us, in God's image.... We must—all of us—be in relationship with them. The point here transcends politics and policy. It is a spiritual point of the highest order.

Out of the Ivory Tower

The project of civic revival so understood will mean a serious attempt by conservatives to put ourselves "in relationship" with "those people" in a way that will necessarily carry us far from the tidy, comfortable offices of think tanks and government agencies. It will mean an effort to recover the meaning of a concept not often associated in the vocabulary of the intellectual elite with conservatism, namely, compassion.

As Marvin Olasky points out in *The Tragedy of American Compassion*, a truly compassionate society demands intensive and immediate personal engagement in the lives of the poor from those who would help—a genuine "suffering with"—not merely writing checks either to the government or to philanthropic agencies.

Compassionate engagement flows not from a lordly, patronizing pity. Rather, it flows out of an awareness that we all suffer from brokenness—some of it the product of our failed political and cultural experiments, some of it the product of our sheer humanity—and that we all benefit from the healing that comes from revitalized civic and spiritual communities.

Conservative commitment to civic revival will thus clearly demand far more attention to and personal in-

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volvement with *doing*, with actual experience in deploying the instruments of civil society to promote that revival. Consequently, more of us must be prepared to support those conservative activists already working at the grassroots level to restore civic vitality—through encouragement of tenant management of public housing, neighborhood economic development, private schools for inner-city children, and church-based moral reconstruction.

The pioneer in this area, of course, is Robert Woodson at the National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise, who has worked for a decade and a half with inner-city private schools and churches, residents of housing projects, proprietors of small business enterprises, and others to assist them in rebuilding neighborhood institutions from the ground up. More recently, Robert Hawkins at the Institute for Contemporary Studies and David Caprara at The Empowerment Network have committed themselves to this work as well. All of them combine actual, hands-on involvement in neighborhood work with reflection on the larger lessons to be learned from that experience.

CONSERVATIVES MUST SQUARELY BACK THE SPONTANEOUS UPRISINGS OF CITIZENS AGAINST THE TYRANNIES OF THE THERAPEUTIC STATE.

In addition, The Heritage Foundation and the Capital Research Center have done superb jobs of featuring some of the more successful efforts at civil reconstruction. Don Eberly, Charles Ballard, and David Blankenhorn have begun to explore ways to resuscitate fatherhood within civil society, Jeff Bell is working to restore legal clout to parents, and William Kristol and John Walters have just launched the New Citizenship Project, to explore all these issues in more detail and think through the larger agenda.

Citizens for Vouchers

Perhaps the most widespread form and clearest practical example of conservative civic activism today, however, is the so-called "private voucher movement." In a number of cities across the nation, philanthropic foundations and corporations have finally despaired of reforming public education from within. At the same time, many inner city parents gaze longingly at nearby church-based schools, which promise instruction in morality and character as well as academics, but whose modest tuitions put them just out of reach. Private voucher systems broker the needs and desires of all these parties: Low-income parents are given vouchers to redeem at any school of their choice, religious or non-sectarian, by reform-minded philanthropists, while value-generating educational institutions receive much-needed financial support.

This is the new citizenship at its best. In cities like Indianapolis, Milwaukee, San Antonio, and Washington, D.C., the voucher movement brings together all these themes—parental involvement, renewed attention to moral and spiritual character, and mobilization of the resources of civil society itself—to recreate strong civic institutions.

An important challenge now is to adapt this prototypical civic activity to other areas of social concern. For instance, Charles Murray's previously unthinkable (but now publicly arguable) proposition that welfare be totally scrapped might even become possible. But this will happen only if civil activists construct a network of privately supported homes for unwed mothers along the lines of Sister Connie Driscoll's homeless shelter in Chicago, wherein rigorous moral and spiritual standards are enforced, parenting skills taught, and "unwanted" children identified and made readily available for adoption. This sort of challenge has been taken up recently by Robert Woodson, as he begins to explore innovative ways to match up conservative civic activists offering energy and resources, to projects in surrounding communities that are successfully rebuilding civic infrastructure.

While these groups and movements are promoting the reconstruction of civil society, they are contributing to another sort of reconstruction as well—that of American conservatism. The public image of conservatism still remains firmly fixed where it was some 15 years ago, when Jeane Kirkpatrick explained that she was not (at the time) a Republican, because Republicans simply did not seem to "*care enough* about the whole."

When conservatives respond to pressing human needs in the inner city with arid discourses on the virtues of the free market, or a cut in the capital gains tax, or vague assurances that "it's up to civil society," we are doing little to dispel our own negative image. Small wonder that liberals still find it so easy to persuade the American people that conservatives, in President Clinton's words, represent only "greed, selfishness, irresponsibility, excess and neglect."

But if conservatives will squarely back the spontaneous uprisings of citizens around the nation against the tyrannies of the therapeutic state—if conservatives place at the center of their agenda a commitment to the reconstruction of civil society, whose institutions and values are of most benefit to the least well off—then finally we may lay to rest the charge that we do not care enough about the whole. That the task of civic reconstruction promises to be complex and difficult—that it demands so much more of us than merely dashing off charity or IRS checks to perpetuate the same failed public policies—might at last begin to change public views about who is genuinely compassionate, and who merely hides behind compassion while continuing to line their own pockets.

In short, the new citizenship implies a new conservatism—a conservatism that should be able to construct for itself a broad-based and enduring majority among the citizens of the United States.

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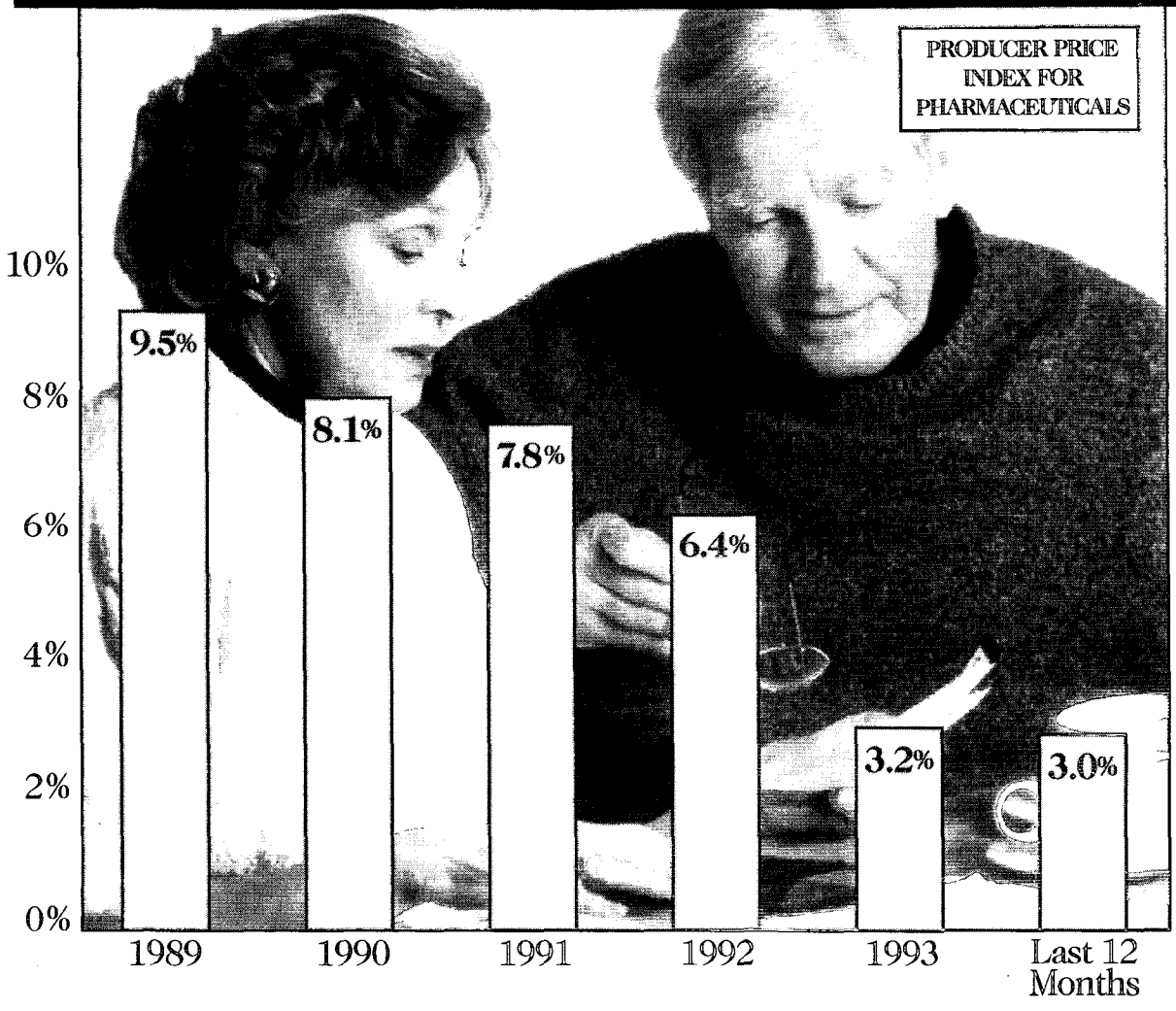
Latest Figures Show Even Further Decline In Drug Price Increases.



Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1994.

April 1994 figures show a continued drop in drug price inflation to a new low of 3%. It's more proof that new competitive forces are working in the pharmaceutical market. For more information call the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America.

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On the Waterfront

Police Unions Are Arresting the War Against Crime

Bret Schundler

President Bill Clinton has made the passage of a federal crime bill a top priority of his agenda this year. Congress is accommodating him with sweeping new legislation that will federalize scores of crimes and use federal funds to put more police officers on America's streets for a five-year period. The bill is complicated and will cost Americans billions more in taxes, but will do virtually nothing to reduce crime.

Why? Because our problem in America is not that we spend too little money on policing, but rather that in return for our money we get too little policing. The solution to this problem is to give local governments more power over police department management. Bill Clinton's legislation does not do this. In fact, if we don't watch out, his increased federal "involvement" in local policing will become increased federal "interference," which together with state government interference is the root of our problem.

Teaching Moral Order

The keys to an effective anti-crime policy are not difficult to identify: Teach moral order and enforce it. But as state and federal interference in education and police department management have become greater, teaching moral order and effectively enforcing the law have become more difficult. Sharing state and federal revenues with local governments is appropriate and necessary. But what we in local government really need—rather than more federal money—is more autonomy. What we really need is for state and federal politicians to get out of our way so that we can do our jobs.

Today many talented teachers leave higher-paying public schools for positions in lower-paying private schools simply because they are tired of not being allowed to enforce order in their public-school classrooms. They will readily tell you that federal and state regulatory interference in the public schools destroys teacher autonomy and diminishes student learning. In Jersey City, we spend $9,000 per child per year in our public system, yet more than half of our public school 9th graders drop out before graduating from high school. Even measuring the less than half of students who do remain in school, fewer than half of these students pass our state-mandated High School Proficiency Test.

But in New Jersey's private schools, there is much less state and federal regulatory interference. Teachers are still allowed to maintain direct control of their classrooms, and student graduation rates and achievement levels are significantly higher. At the Chad School in Newark, spending per child is only one-fourth to one-third of that in New Jersey's public schools. And yet, even though the vast majority of Chad's students come from single-parent, low-income families, 98 percent go on to college. The teachers, free to control their classrooms, maintain a disciplined learning environment and assign over two hours of homework a night. Clearly this workload teaches the students not only basic skills, but also diligence and discipline.

If we had less state and federal interference in our public schools, and we funded education through school vouchers, competition would force all of our public schools to become more like the Chad school. With educational power in the hands of parents and teachers instead of politicians, accountability for results would replace accountability by regulation, and our public schools would once again be able to teach moral order effectively. A decrease in crime would be only one of the many positive results.

Broken Windows

Once moral order is properly taught, enforcing it is not conceptually difficult. If we put a well-trained cop—either on foot or scooter patrol—on every other street corner in our city, we would be able to reduce crime dramatically. This approach is just what the Jersey City Police Department did a generation ago. Cops walked a small and very manageable beat, and as a result there was less crime.

The fact is that intensive police presence on the streets deters crime. If an officer walked or scootered past your house every 10 minutes, car and house thieves committing crimes of opportunity—as distinct from crimes of passion or psychosis—would not view your block as a very good place to do business. The incidence of quality of life offenses, such as vandalism, graffiti, and the playing of loud music (three terrible banes of contemporary urban

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existence) would plummet. Perhaps most importantly, this intensive law enforcement would reinforce the moral teaching that should be taking place at home and in our schools. A child born today into a world of litter, graffiti, open-air drug dealing, violence, and general chaos—where society makes little effort to curb such abuses—does not know that these things are wrong. Even if a child hears that these things are wrong, if that child does not see such things being punished, then as far as that child's experience of life is concerned, such things will be noted as normal and acceptable.

George Kelling and James Q. Wilson have described this mindset as the "broken windows syndrome." Surely all of us, as children, saw an abandoned, deteriorated house with all but one of its windows broken and were tempted to pick up a stone and break that last window. And yet none of us, when we passed a well-maintained home with all of its windows intact, even gave a thought to breaking its windows. Today we are raising children in the inner city amidst the chaos and "broken windows" of unenforced laws. Ours is not a lawless society, but a society of increasingly unenforced laws. The result is that our children see chaos, they internalize chaos, and, not surprisingly, they learn to participate in chaos. Putting a lot more police on the street, and instructing them to rigorously enforce our laws and to re-establish order will be absolutely necessary to bringing up the next generation of children to be law-abiding.

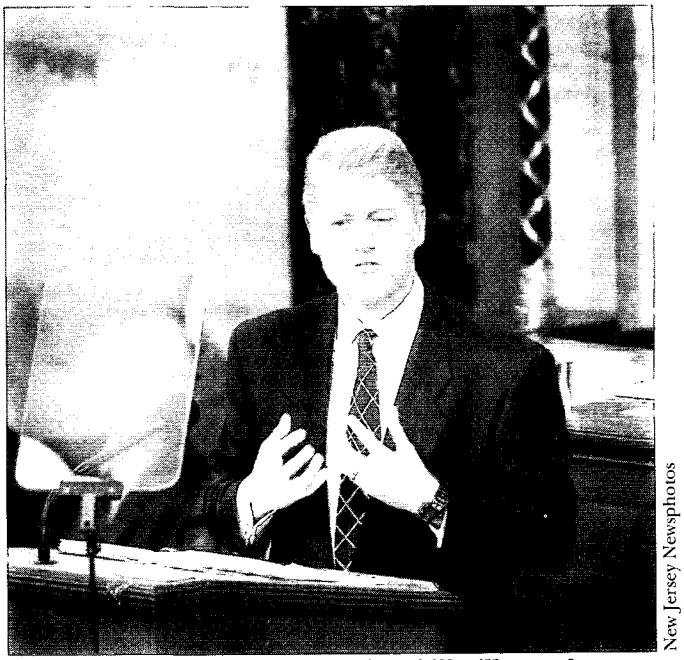
Patronage Paybacks

Of course, putting more police on the street is much harder in practice than in theory. And it is hard precisely because of federal and state political interference in local police management. I know from personal experience.

When I ran for Mayor of Jersey City, New Jersey, in 1992, I promised the voters that my first priority would be to make our streets safe. Despite a very high crime rate, fewer than half of the city's police officers were assigned to street patrol; over 60 percent were assigned to specialist units or were in the precinct station houses shuffling paper. Two officers were actually delivering inter-office mail. This situation was the product of Jersey City's patronage-politics past, where comfortable jobs in all city departments were given as a reward for political service and loyalty.

This corrupt policy has had tremendously negative results. First, the lack of an effective deterrent to crime has encouraged crime. Second, it has weakened the social reinforcement necessary for the moral education of our children. Finally, as far as the police department is concerned, the patronage system has made assignment to street patrol intolerable.

Imagine the circumstances our police officers must confront out on the street. Because there is little deterrence, and because the moral education of our children is ineffective, there is a lot of crime. With too few cops on the street, police response time has grown longer and a response backlog has developed. Those unfortunate officers who are assigned to street patrol, therefore, must spend eight solid hours flying from one crime scene to the next, almost always arriving long after the fact. By the time the police do arrive, the victimized citizens are as



New Jersey Newsphotos

President Bill Clinton's crime bill will cost the taxpayers billions, but will do virtually nothing to reduce crime.

angry at the police as they are at the criminals. This situation has made patrolling the streets of Jersey City absolute hell; the first interest of many police officers is to do whatever they can to get off the street and into a desk job as quickly as possible.

Civilian Assignments

I vowed to end this destructive patronage in the police department and to civilianize all jobs in the precinct houses that could reasonably be performed by a civilian. I also promised to put more than three-fourths of our police officers out on street patrol, with half of that number specifically committed to community-based policing. My determination to accomplish these goals helped me win election as Jersey City's first Republican mayor since World War I.

Upon taking office, I immediately moved to carry out my plan. My first goal was to supplement the 300 officers on rapid response—policing in patrol cars—with another 300 police officers performing community-based policing. The city would be divided up into 133 patrol districts, varying in size according to the density of their population and the incidence of crime. Individual police officers would be assigned to patrol specific districts for a period of at least one year without rotation so that a relationship could develop between the police officer and the community.

Once these re-assignments were completed, the next goal would be to properly train the community officers to work cooperatively with district residents whom we would form into neighborhood police committees. As a final step, we would institute a professional-standards unit staffed with superior officers and police department civilian managers to meet with the neighborhood police committees on a regular basis, in order to ensure that the community officers were performing satisfactorily.

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New Jersey Newsphotos

Bret Schundler: "Our problem is not that we spend too little on policing, but that in return for our money we get too little policing."

Up Against the Union

In those areas of the city where we have been able to carry out this plan, crime is falling and the citizens are happy. But putting this plan in action has been a real challenge. Our efforts to re-assign police officers from desk jobs to street duty ran us smack into the police union. The moment we re-assigned those two police mailmen to street patrol, they initiated a suit against the city charging us with an unfair labor practice. You might ask why it is unfair to ask police officers to do patrol work. The answer, according to the police union, is that a clause in the police contract states, "Police work cannot be diminished except through contract negotiation." What makes delivering inter-office mail police work? The fact that a police officer is doing it, says the union.

According to this reasoning, to have civilians perform duties that prior patronage-oriented administrations have allowed police officers to do diminishes the total number of jobs that police officers perform, and therefore diminishes police work. Reducing the number of police functions must be negotiated in the union contract; it cannot be ordered by executive fiat.

Naturally, I have refused to accept this definition of police work, and fortunately, the city has been successful in the first stage of the officers' legal challenge, winning its case before a state mediation board. These two officers are now appealing their case to the courts and the case is in litigation. We may ultimately win the suit, and if we do, our community-policing efforts will be significantly bolstered. But it is also possible that we will lose this case, and that is where interference by distant government becomes so evidently and totally destructive.

We now have a score of police suits filed against the city on the same grounds as those cited above. None of these suits would have the slightest chance of success were it not for the offending clause in the union contract which suggests that the supposed diminishing of police work must be negotiated. If I could exorcise this clause from the contract, I could fully implement my community-policing plan.

But that's the rub. Clauses cannot simply be erased from contracts, they must be negotiated away. In New Jersey, we have binding arbitration laws written by the state legislature that govern local government contract negotiations. When we in the city administration want to change a contract clause that impedes effective police department management, the union has the right to just say no, and we are then automatically forced into arbitration.

The arbitrators are not randomly assigned to the case, they must be accepted by the union. Arbitrators are not paid a fixed wage by the state, but earn their pay on a per-diem basis when they are working. The local law firms representing different city administrations before these arbitrators are legion, but the law firms representing the many state police unions are few. Accordingly, the arbitrators know that if they make an award that hurts management they will still be able to find work. But if they give an award that hurts the union, the few law firms that represent New Jersey's police unions can blacklist these arbitrators; if blacklisted, they will never arbitrate in New Jersey again.

Double the Raises

These ludicrous arbitration rules do more than impede effective personnel deployment; they also inflate police department wages, which makes fielding a large enough police force to patrol our streets prohibitively expensive. In Jersey City, the average police officer earns approximately $55,000 in base pay, $15,000 in overtime, a $5,000 longevity bonus, and has a benefits package worth another $15,000. In a low-income city where per-capita income is only $10,000, our average police officer earns a package with a total value of nearly $90,000. Surely if we had the legal means to reduce police department salaries we would still be able to attract many qualified candidates to the force. A wage reduction would allow us to put many more police officers on the street without increasing taxes.

But we don't have the legal right to reduce salaries. In fact, far from declining, or even holding relatively steady, the average police-contract award coming out of recent arbitrations in New Jersey has increased police salaries at twice the rate of inflation.

Inflation is the average rate of the growth in prices in

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a given economy. If one sector is consistently getting twice the average rate of price growth, then other sectors must be getting less than the average rate. That means an ever-bigger portion of our total economic pie is going to pay just the police salaries in Jersey City. In fact, even adjusting for productivity gains, one can mathematically demonstrate that if the Jersey City Police Department continues getting salary increases at twice the rate of inflation, and this trend continues indefinitely, there will eventually come a day when it takes all the money in the city just to pay the salaries of the police department.

In Their Faces

It may sound silly to talk about absurd trend extensions, but from where I sit what is really silly is the fact that we mayors cannot more easily re-assign police officers to street patrol, and cannot more easily afford to hire sufficient numbers of police officers to make our streets safe. America is supposed to be a country where government exists to serve the people, not to serve organized government special interests. But in spite of the fact that the New Jersey League of Municipalities has made binding arbitration reform its top legislative priority for the last five years, no reform bill has ever made it to the floor of both houses for a vote.

As I said previously, our crime problem is not the result of our spending too little on policing, but rather of our getting too little policing for our money—and the root cause of this problem is non-local government interference in police department management. In a non-regulated labor negotiation environment that is free of arbitration laws and federal and state interference, I would be free as mayor to do the right thing. If I paid police officers too little, I would not be able to find quality personnel to do the job well, and the people of Jersey City would blame me for it.

THE SOLUTION TO CRIME WILL COME FROM REFORM OF FEDERAL AND STATE LABOR LAWS.

On the other hand, if I paid police officers too much and demanded too little, we would not be able to put enough police officers on the street to effectively enforce the law—as is the case today—and the people would blame me for that too. In either case, because I am the one the people are holding accountable for policing, I would have an incentive to manage the department intelligently, or I would get thrown out of office.

Now let's consider the position of our state legislators. They are removed from the people. If someone gets mugged, I am the one who gets the angry phone call at night, not our state representative. On the other hand, the state legislators have the police union's lobbyists in their faces continually, and the union is dead set against changing the binding arbitration laws in New Jersey. The union is not afraid of telling our legislators that if they disappoint the union, the union will make their lives miserable. Not surprisingly, the state legislators, who are human and self-interested like everyone else, grant the union demands.

A Little Revolution

It doesn't matter if we replace one politician with another; whenever politicians are given power in matters where they are not directly held accountable by the people, and where their interests are not necessarily commensurate with the people's, it will be the politicians interests that are served and not the people's. This will always be the case, which is why the only solution to our current crime problem is, as Thomas Jefferson might recommend, a little revolution.

Reform is when you change what you are doing. Revolution is when you change who has the power to do things. We need to have a revolution and get the federal and state governments off our backs at the local level so that we mayors, who are held directly accountable by the people, can have the power to manage our police departments in a way that makes sense. Hence it is less regulation and more autonomy that we mayors need right now, far more than additional money, to win the war against crime.

Empower the Mayors

Bill Clinton's crime bill, in the finest Democratic party tradition, does little more than throw additional money at the crime problem while shifting the cost of policing from the local to the national taxpayer. His proposal completely misses the target. If nothing is done to control soaring salaries or permit more intelligent personnel deployment, then more federal aid will do nothing.

Many political leaders in the Republican party are calling for an increase in the building of new jail spaces, and for truth in sentencing laws which would lengthen the minimum time spent in jail by those convicted of serious crimes. These Republican proposals would indeed reduce crime—especially violent crime—since the vast majority of violent crimes are committed by a relatively small number repeat violent offenders. Still, we could achieve these same ends without the expense of building more jail cells simply by deterring most petty crimes more effectively. And we could easily do this through empowering local governments to manage their police departments more effectively. If we can put enough police back on the streets, we will be able to re-establish general order and deter most crimes of opportunity before they happen. That will leave plenty of spaces available in our jails for the career and psychopathic criminals who we really need to keep locked up.

Most politicians will be reluctant to speak the truth that the solution to crime will come from reform of federal and state labor laws. To do so will antagonize a very organized and powerful governmental interest group—the police union. Indeed, it will always be politically easier to talk about almost any other strategy. But every now and then, when times become bad enough, having the courage to speak about truly revolutionary ideas does equate with good politics, and can lead the way to truly revolutionary, much needed results. Now is just such a time.

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FLANAGAN'S ISLAND

How Boys Town Rescues Troubled Teens

BRIAN JENDRYKA

In the early morning hours of September 22, 1993, Amtrak passenger Michael Dopheide was awakened by the sounds of screeching brakes and someone screaming, "Oh my God, we're all going to die."

Amtrak's Sunset Limited, traveling at 70 mph, had just jumped the tracks over the Bayou Canot bridge in Alabama, and sections of the train were slipping into the water below. Smoke, fire, and the terrified scream of passengers combined to form what one passenger called a scene from Dante's *Inferno.*

One of the sinking cars contained Dopheide, along with dozens of other passengers. In the foggy darkness, and without his glasses, Dopheide escaped through a window and swam to safety. But then another reflex took over, and he went back for the others. Keeping afloat by hanging onto floating debris and treading water, Dopheide is credited with saving the lives of 30 passengers that night.

Explanations for heroism are sometimes hard to come by. Dopheide points to his years at Boys Town, a family-based community for troubled youth, as a large part of the answer. A lesson he repeatedly learned at Boys Town was that "No matter what, no matter how difficult the situation is, you're still going to help, you're still going to carry this person to safety."

Based in Omaha, Nebraska, Boys Town has been carrying troubled teens to safety for more than 75 years. It was founded as a boys shelter in 1917 by Father Edward Flanagan, who used a $90 loan for the first month's rent and a stubborn desire to keep homeless, hungry boys from becoming homeless, jobless, hungry men. Since then, its skills-based, highly disciplined, and family-oriented philosophy has helped transform the lives of over 17,000 children—boys and girls with some of most intractable of social and behavioral problems.

CHANGING PROFILE

As illegitimacy mounts and more and more American families fall apart, Boys Town is a model for a foster care system in crisis, and an attractive alternative to a welfare system that undermines parental responsibility. Recognizing that the care of troubled youth is a growth industry, Boys Town is itself expanding, and has set up satellite residential homes in nine communities around the United States. Boys Town also operates seven emergency shelters, a national research hospital for children, and a national hotline that handles over 500,000 calls from troubled children and parents annually. In addition, Boys Town provides training for teachers and parents like Common Sense Parenting, which helps build parenting skills.

When Flanagan first launched his rescue effort, Boys Town kids were the self-confident, rough-and-tumble orphans like the one Mickey Rooney portrayed in the 1938 movie *Boys' Town.* Not anymore. Many are like Sam, who came to Boys Town because he lost his glasses at school one day and just "couldn't take another beating" from his father. Or like Jill, who had been sexually abused since age three by her father, and got drunk in 6th grade because she thought it would dull the pain. Or like Jack, who called Father Val Peter from the Omaha bus station because he was a member of a teenage gang called the Bloods and wanted out. "I just saw my best friend killed and I don't want it to happen to me," he said.

Boys Town candidates reflect the worst trends in American culture. Most have been out of school for two to three years. Three-quarters come from one-parent families. Many have tried alcohol or drugs. A majority of girls have been sexually abused, and four out of 10 boys have been physically abused. One in five have attempted suicide.

There is no standard route into Boys Town. Some kids are placed there by their parents; others are abandoned, become wards of the state, and then are referred there. Some just show up on their own. The typical Boys Town resident has been to several other child-care centers, shelters, psychiatric hospitals, or foster homes. Many have had run-ins with the law—40 percent have been on probation or parole. Some have even committed murder.

Despite these dark beginnings, kids who come to Boys Town emerge with a bright future. Approximately 80 percent of the children who come here are successful. By Boys Town's standards, this means: They graduate from the program and high school, stay out of trouble with the law, and remain employed and off welfare.

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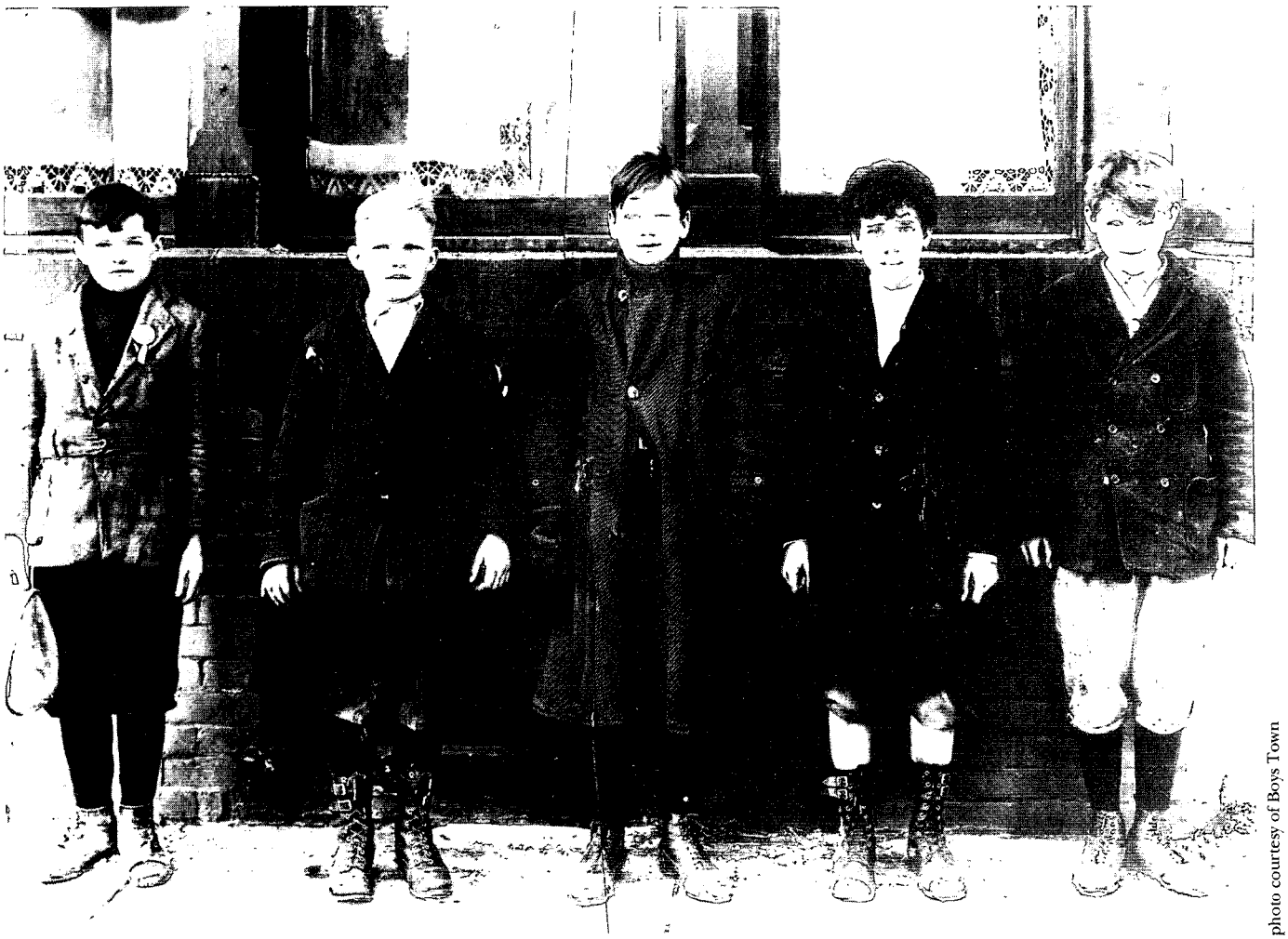

photo courtesy of Boys Town

When Father Flanagan started Boys Town in 1917, many of his early residents were homeless, hungry orphans.

Boys Town graduates compare well, not only with their peers in other foster care homes, but with kids outside the child care industry. Compared to the national norm, Boys Town alumni are more likely to hold a job or be in school, have jobs at a higher average income level, more likely to attend church on a regular basis, and less likely to use illegal drugs.

No such thing as a bad boy

From the days of Father Flanagan, Boys Town's guiding credo has been, "There's no such thing as a bad boy—only bad environment, bad thinking, and bad training." This belief has never meant treating children as victims who bear no responsibility for their lives. On the contrary, it has meant providing them with an environment that helps sustain good character.

"If you live in a neighborhood where everyone is standing on a street corner smoking crack, it's going to be a lot harder not to do those things," says Carolyn Novicoff, one of Boys Town's regional directors. "If your mom is out on that same street corner smoking crack, you probably can't go home. Not because you're a bad kid, but because right now, home isn't a place you can be."

Flanagan, too, was convinced that physical surroundings make a difference. That's why he purchased a 160-acre farm to give more room for the growing number of boys seeking his help. Flanagan's Boys' Home was a highly structured, religious haven where abandoned and neglected boys lived in large dormitories, and stayed busy to stay out of trouble.

Today, those spartan dormitories and vast mess halls have been replaced by 76 single-family homes scattered throughout a 1,300-acre, $90 million enterprise. Incorporated as a separate city in 1936, Boys Town has its own police force, fire station, and post office. The main campus also features a middle school, high school, career center, two churches, and a working farm. The campus serves as a long-term treatment center for approximately 550 children, 8 to 18 years of age.

While Boys Town is sympathetic to a child's abusive past, a kid comes to Boys Town for help, not pity. This is something Father Peter isn't afraid to say: "I know you've tried suicide. I know your mom beat you. But God's got a destiny for you son, you ought to get off your behind and start at it."

Skills 101

"We're the people who teach skills." That's how Father Val Peter, executive director of Boys Town since 1985, distinguishes his program from other long-term treatment homes. At Boys Town, residents get a second chance to learn the skills most children pick up in a family: They

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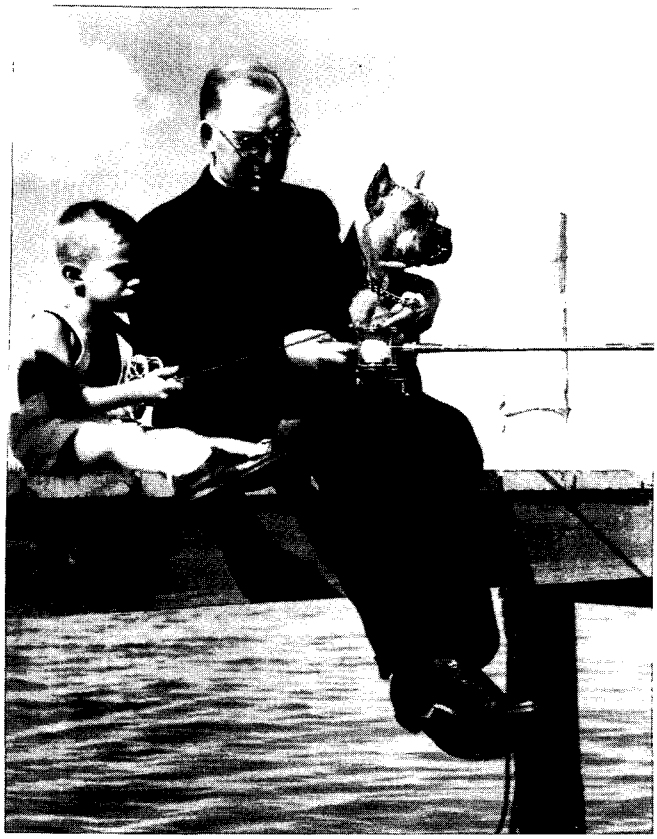

photo courtesy of Boys Town

Father Flanagan's belief that "idleness is the principal cause of delinquency" has prompted Boys Town to keep its kids constantly busy.

learn social skills, such as how to have relationships, and vocational skills, including how to get and hold a job. Boys Town children are taught more than 30 distinct skills, the seven most fundamental of which are: following instructions; accepting criticism; accepting "no" for an answer; greeting someone; getting the teacher's attention; making a request; and disagreeing appropriately. These are "the skills that get them through life," says Dave Coughlin, deputy executive director of Boys Town.

The Boys Town Training Center outlines a systematic, multi-step approach for every teaching interaction that takes place—whether it's in the home, classroom, or playground. The focus is on praising a child when he follows the rules and acts appropriately, and constructively criticizing him when he does not. When a child finally practices acceptable behavior, he is consistently praised for doing so. This simple pattern is absent from the background of most Boys Town children.

The Boys Town staff use a motivational approach to teach correct behavior, tying a child's privileges to their actions. Each child begins his stay at Boys Town with an "empowerment card," with which he or she accumulates positive and negative points as a reward for appropriate behavior and punishment for inappropriate behavior. A child may earn 1,000 points for following instructions, but lose 2,000 for not cleaning his room. The card travels everywhere with the child, including school, where teachers and administrators may add or subtract points.

To maintain basic privileges, a child must earn 10,000 points every day. Children who fail to do so lose their privileges and are basically grounded—no watching TV, listening to music, or using the phone. As a child advances through the system, he can "buy" extra privileges, such as staying up later or going off campus for a few hours. Eventually, the child no longer carries the point card, and with increased responsibility earns more privileges.

Cause and Effect

The point-card system is necessary, according to Coughlin, "because you can't get internalization until you get externalization." In other words, you have to show the kids appropriate behavior before they can understand why it's appropriate. The reasoning behind this is simple, according to Tim Lentz, one of the family-teachers. The children at Boys Town "are out of touch with the whole concept of cause and effect," he says.

"They don't understand which behaviors pay off," says Lori Mathsen, another family-teacher. "Or, they understand too well which behaviors pay off, but they're inappropriate behaviors." These are children who are used to settling arguments with their fists or using sex to get what they want—girls like Jane, who asked on her first day, "Who do I have to sleep with so I don't get beat up?"

"Getting away from immediate gratification is one of the toughest things to teach a kid," says family-teacher Chris Mathsen, Lori's husband. "You have really made progress with a kid if you can get him to think about 'how what I'm doing today is going to determine what's going on tomorrow.'"

Full-time Parenthood

"The most powerful institution in the United States is the family," says Coughlin. "For better or worse, the family is the primary teacher of values." Unfortunately, children are not receiving the attention they need in many families. "The main focus of parents is to raise their kids," says Tom Dowd, director of Boys Town's National Training Center. "Our culture has kind of gotten away from that."

BOYS TOWN HAS NEVER NEEDED FENCES OR LOCKED DOORS. "THIS IS A HOME," FATHER FLANAGAN ONCE SAID. "YOU DO NOT WALL IN MEMBERS OF YOUR FAMILY."

For this reason, when it came time to re-evaluate Boys Town in the early 1970s, Coughlin and others turned to the family model. "We decided that these children are probably going to go out and start families, and if they are, then we better teach them how to live in a family environment." To do this, Boys Town created the vocation of "family-teacher."

Family-teachers are married couples who work full-time, 24 hours a day, as parents for a home of eight boys or girls. The hiring process to become one of Boys Town's 76 family-teacher couples is rigorous: Only one couple out of 18 makes it through the extensive series of inter-

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photo courtesy of Boys Town

The spartan dormitories and vast mess halls of earlier days have been replaced by 76 family homes scattered throughout Boys Town's 1,300-acre Nebraska campus.

views and applications. Couples then go through a lengthy training program that teaches them the central skills they will need at Boys Town.

Two non-negotiable requirements for family-teachers are a strong marriage and patience. These are essential because, unlike many of the juvenile homes or other places the kids have been, the family-teacher does not stop working at 5:00 PM or on weekends. Explains Coughlin: "The family-teacher is going to be there Friday afternoon at five o'clock. And eight o'clock. And they're going to be there at three o'clock in the morning when a kid gets a call saying his mom overdosed in Washington, D.C."

The family-teachers, along with an assistant, work around the clock doing just what their titles imply—teaching the kids at Boys Town how a healthy, traditional family should work. Since 75 percent of the children are from single-parent families, they have little experience with the genuine article. "There's no question that single parenthood is a factor associated with these kids' problems," says Daniel Daly, director of program planning, research, and evaluation at Boys Town. "People who operate programs like Boys Town have known that for 40 years."

Eight is Enough

The family model at Boys Town is highly structured and closely monitored. These are families with 6:30 a.m. wake-up calls, daily chores, family meals, study hours, and weekend family outings. Add to that the trials and tribulations of having seven brothers or sisters and you have a powerful learning environment.

"You have eight guys in a house, and probably 90 percent of them have been through similar experiences, similar stresses on their lives," says Chris Gillespie, who graduated from Boys Town in May. "There's a bond there. It's not hard to make friends."

Even a little time spent in one of the homes bears this out. The kids admit—if pressed—that they are not just roommates and housemates, but friends and brothers. Many children at Boys Town have blood relatives there as well, and the family setting seems to repair and strengthen those relationships. Before coming to Boys Town, for example, Monica did not get along with her sister and would not even speak to her brother. After sharing a room with her sister at Boys Town, that relationship has improved and she is now closer to her brother than to anyone else on or off campus.

A tour of a home reveals clean rooms with football and basketball posters, radios and tape players, and pictures of friends and families. Even David's country music coexists peacefully with Montez's rap music in the U-shaped, two-person bedrooms. The house has video games, a Ping-Pong table, and a basketball hoop. Though the kids' lives are very structured, this is no military camp—family teachers make sure there is time to play.

"Many of these kids have not had an opportunity to be kids," says Carolyn Novicoff. "Part of what we do is give them those opportunities." It's another notion borrowed from Flanagan: "Some of the finest people in the world go through life under a handicap because they never

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photo courtesy of Boys Town

Boys Town began accepting girls in 1979. There are now over 200 girls at the 550-student main campus.

learned how to play when they were children."

Another Flanaganism—"idleness is the principal cause of delinquency"—has prompted Boys Town to keep its kids constantly busy. Family-teachers encourage children to participate in sports, work part-time jobs, and take on after-school activities. The Lentz home, for example, nurtures a wide array of interests and activities. David, who will be attending Wayne State University next fall, works on the school paper and serves as a Boys Town tour guide. Bill, who will be entering the Navy in August, manages the track team and works off-campus at Burger King. Lazaro likes to lift weights, Jacob runs cross-country, and Demond and Montez play football. Brad spends his time working on campus at the plumbing shop, and Isaac works as a fire cadet.

A Day in the Life

Every morning and every evening a typical Boys Town family eats together, with one of the boys helping a family-teacher cook and another cleaning up. Every week, the kids in the family elect a "youth manager," who makes sure everyone wakes up on time and finishes their chores. Every evening after dinner the family holds a meeting to discuss the day's events, work out any problems, and plans future trips. It is here especially that the kids learn that their voice counts. In addition to a one-week vacation in the summer, families often take weekend trips in the family van to the movies, roller-skating, or a park.

Like all families, these brothers and sisters have their difficulties. Although fights are not common, they do happen, Lentz says. Children involved in a fight are first required to take responsibility for their actions, and then spend time practicing better peer relations skills with each other. This often means working together on projects, such as yard work, in which "they're going to spend a lot of time together using the skills they should have used in the first place," Lentz says.

Other common problems, such as smoking or drinking, are usually kept under control with positive peer pressure. "Peer culture operates 24 hours a day here," says Lentz. The older boys and girls supply much of this pressure, and kids will often listen to their peers when they won't listen to their family-teachers, Mathsen says.

Like the Lentzes, many family-teacher couples have their own children living with them at Boys Town. Having a newborn and a 4-year-old in the house with eight adolescents is a good experience for both her natural and foster children, who see firsthand what child-rearing is all about, Lori Lentz says, adding that managing a house full of children also has greatly improved their parenting skills.

Like foster care homes, the goal of Boys Town is to reunite parents and their children. But Boys Town has one rule that supersedes this goal: Always do what is in the best interests of the child. "Some families are not salvageable," Coughlin says. "That's a very unpopular thing to say, but it's true." Nevertheless, most kids spend about 18 to 22 months at Boys Town and either return to their families or graduate and go out into the work force or on to college.

Largely because of the emphasis on healthy families, Boys Town kids typically have seen the community as a sanctuary—and have done what ever they could to avoid being kicked out. For this reason, it has never needed fences or locked doors. "This is a home," Father Flanagan once said. "You do not wall in members of your family."

Deliberate Alliance

Central to the success of the Boys Town formula is its deliberate alliance between family and school life. School teachers play an important role in giving the children of Boys Town both a solid academic education and in reinforcing the social skills taught at home. Patrick McGinnis, principal of Boys Town High School, attributes the school's 84 percent graduation rate to the close interaction between school and family.

"The real factor is the linkage between the school and home. We're all reading from the same hymnal," he says.

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School teachers are trained to teach 40 pro-social behaviors that supplement the skills children learn at home. For example, McGinnis and his staff see about six kids a day because of discipline problems. The principal's swift response results in children losing their privileges for the day. Such incidents are greatly reduced on Friday night, when basketball games or other school events take place.

Between the school teachers, family-teachers, and the point-card system, the kids at Boys Town soon learn that it is in their best interest to stay caught-up in class. Otherwise, there are too many lost privileges. "A teacher assigns homework, and it gets real expensive for a kid not to do it. It's not impossible, but it's just darn hard to squirrel out of it," McGinnis says.

Class size and individual attention also are strong features in the educational system. At the middle school, average class size is eight students; in high school, it is 12. Many classes are taught by two teachers or a teacher and an assistant. Kids are placed in grades according to their age, not academic achievement, thus raising expectations for those who are behind. Tutoring, positive reinforcement and the fact that all the children are behind in some regard helps diffuse self-esteem problems. "A lot of kids come here with a whole lot of anger, a whole self-esteem checklist," McGinnis says. "Overdoing the positive is kind of the glue that keeps them together."

Playing Catch-Up

Boys Town's graduation rate is even more impressive considering that most children arrive two or three years behind academically. At least 10 percent of the 9th graders, for example, start out reading at a 3rd- or 4th-grade reading level. But Mary Curtis, director of the Boys Town reading center, has found that many children can raise their reading levels by four grades in less than a year and a half.

The key? High expectations. Teachers set the reading level above the level of the students, reminding them that learning from mistakes is simply part of the education process, says Daniel Daly, Director of Program Planning, Research, and Evaluation at Boys Town. "We don't work on psychology, we work on reading," he says.

BOYS TOWN EDUCATORS CONSIDER READING AN ESSENTIAL BUILDING BLOCK. "WHEN A KID HITS 15 AND HE CAN'T READ, IT'S VIRTUALLY A TERMINAL ILLNESS," SAYS DANIEL DALY. "HE'S DAMNED TO A LIFE THAT'S GOING TO BE SUBSTANDARD."

This approach flies in the face of the conventional solution of "dumbing down" the curriculum for poor-performing students, Daly says. The result in some urban schools, for example, is that "teachers have to show films for their kids to get any information because they can't read." By contrast, Boys Town educators consider reading an essential building block of a successful education. Not being able to read is like a cancer, Daly says. "When a kid hits 15 and he can't read, it's virtually a terminal illness. He's damned to a life that's going to be substandard."

photo courtesy of Boys Town

Father Val Peter, Boys Town's director, believes that religion is crucial for transforming troubled kids into responsible young adults.

Vocational Skills

The high school is also well-designed to teach the children the hands-on skills they will need after graduation. All students at Boys Town High School are required to take four pre-vocational courses in keyboarding, computer literacy, career development, and home management, which teaches them how to do everything from fixing a leaky kitchen sink to cooking for themselves to changing a car's oil. After they have completed this sequence, many students take additional vocation-oriented courses in such fields as automotive services, computer skills, health services, and construction.

Some students also go to the neighboring public high school for advanced study. Gillespie's math and science classes helped him get into the University of Nebraska, where he will be attending college next year. "I've grown to love the place," he says. "I don't know where I'd be if I weren't here," he says. "I definitely wouldn't be running track. I definitely wouldn't be president of the student council. I probably wouldn't even be in school."

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photo courtesy of Boys Town

Many famous celebrities have visited Boys Town, including Lou Gehrig and Babe Ruth, pictured here with Father Flanagan.

Monica will spend part of her junior year at the public school next year to prepare for college. Without prodding from her Boys Town family and friends, it probably never would have happened. "If I were back home, I would think that there is just no way."

Great Expectations

High expectations, both in and out of school, help drive the educational success of Boys Town kids. Take school attendance, where absences are few and very far between. "When you show up at a place where there are 550 other kids and everybody goes to school every day, you don't even stop to think about it," Mathsen says.

High standards apply literally everywhere in Boys Town. The social skills learning model is deeply rooted in high expectations. Respect for others—especially the opposite sex—is taken very seriously here. Sexual remarks, so common in public schools, are not tolerated here. Rap, heavy metal and other music with lyrics that degrade women is off limits. Dave Shanahan, Director of the Boys Town home campus, explains: "Boys and girls learn very quickly here that being rude to one another is just not acceptable behavior."

Likewise, family-teachers and school teachers also are held to very high standards. Family teachers must be re-certified every year, and school teachers are evaluated every other year. "Attention to detail is our greatest asset," Coughlin says.

He's not kidding. Every family-teacher is evaluated on over 190 items, including reviews by the Boys Town administration, teachers, children's parents, probation officers, and even the judge who recommends a child's placement at Boys Town. Family-teachers are also evaluated by the kids themselves. "You should never do less for these children than you would for your own children," Coughlin says. "If you go in thinking that, you've already made your program second class."

Boys Town is so determined to maintain its standards for relational skills that it has created a national computer database to keep track of every confrontation that happens every day. With nine satellite campuses and seven emergency shelters and residential centers, this is no small task. The database can be accessed to check the history of a child, a family-teacher, or even an entire off-campus Boys Town home. Every morning, a daily report of incidents is compiled and evaluated on the main campus. Breakdowns in the system are investigated—even to the point of checking transcripts from family-teacher training sessions five years ago.

Tough Cases

The system works well for the vast majority of children. There are, however, some kids who either cannot or will not be helped by Boys Town methods. Corporal punishment is not allowed, and striking a child even once results in immediate termination of a family-teacher. Likewise, physical exercise such as push-ups, sit-ups, or running laps also cannot be used as punishment; swearing at or otherwise demeaning a child results in a letter of warning to the parent.

If aggressive and unruly behavior cannot be changed, the child is placed in a 30-day pre-separation program, where he has one last chance to work on his problems before getting kicked out. Attacking a family-teacher or another child is a ticket out of Boys Town, Coughlin says. So is repeated running away from campus or sexual relations with others on campus. Judges may remove kids from Boys Town if they violate conditions of their placement.

The Role of Faith

"Every boy must learn to pray. How he prays is up to him." This Father Flanagan dictum persists as another guiding principle for Boys Town children and staff. According to Father Peter, religion is "absolutely crucial" for transforming troubled kids into responsible young adults.

"It is the single most important characteristic of a Boys Town education," says Father Peter. "Kids come here powerless, and you can't get better unless you get in touch with a higher power." Tom Everson, Boys Town's Director of Religious Education, describes this powerlessness as "spiritual abuse." To overcome this abuse kids must get in touch with God, Everson says.

Before a child is admitted to Boys Town, his family must fill out a religious statement that identifies the child's religion. No one is denied acceptance to Boys Town because of religious upbringing, or lack of it. The point, officials say, is to help direct children to a faith tradition they find most meaningful. Jewish students at-

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tend an off-campus synagogue, and arrangements are made for children from other faith traditions. Children with no religious affiliation spend one semester studying the Protestant and Catholic Church tradition and then decide for themselves their religious preference.

Faith is a foreign experience to many children who come come to Boys Town. They need to be taught how to pray and worship, and are encouraged to participate actively in their chosen faith communities. Religion class is a required part of the Boys Town curriculum. At home, family-teachers set up specific times for reflection, private prayer, and reading the Scriptures and other devotional books.

Moreover, parents and teachers strive to show the practical impact of faith on everyday life. Family-teachers and others integrate religion into the skills-model, using Bible parables as examples to teach morality. In school, kids bring in lyrics from popular songs and critique them from the point of view of the Ten Commandments. Exercises like this not only make class more interesting, but teach kids how the Scriptures offer practical guidance for life, Everson says. Children also take part in special service projects in nearby senior citizen homes and a school for retarded children.

After graduation, over half of Boys Town alumni surveyed attended church at least once a month—32 percent attended at least once a week. In addition, many graduates go on to work in the clergy.

Successful Alumni

The staff and services at Boys Town's home campus—including education and treatment programs and a $30,000 salary for each family-teacher couple—produce an annual operating budget of about $30 million. That breaks down to approximately $125 a day, $47,000 a year per child, about average for long-term residential child-care programs, which typically range from $75 to as much as $400 a day.

Without solid financial planning and outside help, Boys Town probably would have remained Father Flanagan's dream. But Flanagan planned for the future, and in 1941 started the Foundation Fund, an endowment which has grown to $500 million. The fund covers a third of the organization's annual operating costs, with another third coming from state child-care agencies, and the rest from private donations.

Individuals and businesses also donate goods and services to Boys Town. Permabound has donated truckloads of books over the years, and companies like Starter have donated clothing for the children. One local orthodontist has even donated free dental work for some of the most needy children. Many celebraties have visited or performed at Boys Town, including Franklin Roosevelt, John Philip Sousa, Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, George Burns, Gracie Allen, Bud Abbott, Lou Costello, Lou Gehrig, and Babe Ruth, who was an orphan himself.

photo courtesy of Boys Town

"Every boy must learn to pray. How he prays is up to him."—Father Edward Flanagan

The community's financial strength has allowed it to work miracles with the children who come here. Robert Frost wrote that "Home is the place, where, if you have to go there, they have to take you in." Such is Boys Town. Coughlin relates the story of one child who was so violent he had to be taken away in handcuffs after threatening to kill his family-teacher. Years later, that same boy—now a man—returned to the doorstep of his family-teacher. He brought two people with him, along with a very short, but poignant message: "I know we didn't leave good, but I wanted my wife and son to meet the only person that ever made any difference to me."

Rod Dennis, a Boys Town alumnus who served in the Gulf War, is another such story. To his delight, Dennis not only received mail in Kuwait from Father Peter, but hundreds of letters of support from Boys Town kids. After the war, Dennis came back to give his Kuwaiti Liberation Medal to his "brothers and sisters" at Boys Town. He came back a hero to a music hall packed with children. On a dark blue banner were the words that each new Boys Town resident hears when they first arrive: "Welcome Home."

They are welcome indeed.

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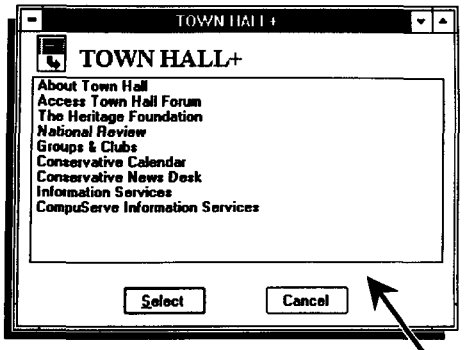

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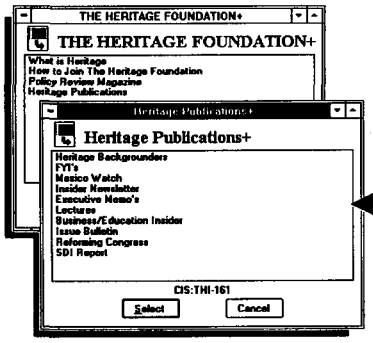

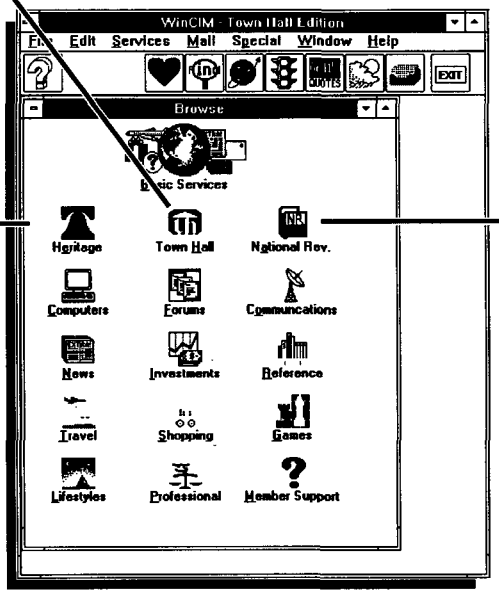

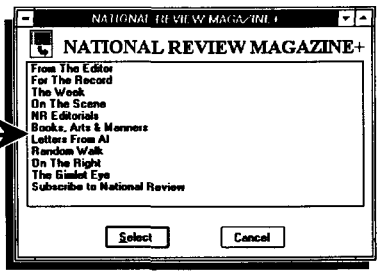

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Education's Long March

The Choice Revolution Shifts to the States

Daniel McGroarty

After 12 years of Republican rhetoric promoting school vouchers, a Democrat—championed by the teachers' unions that regard private school choice as unmitigated evil—wins the White House.

In California, a voucher initiative goes down to defeat by a margin of more than two to one.

Ten years after vouchers moved to the center of the education debate, just one state has pushed through a pilot program, limited to one percent of the students in one city.

Have we heard the death knell for private school choice?

Patient Persistence

Not at all. In fact, the silence in Washington is deceiving, masking a groundswell of pro-voucher activity and advocacy in cities and states across the country. Even after last year's landslide loss in California—as the National Education Association's (NEA) morning-after press release trumpeted, the nineteenth defeat for a voucher initiative since 1966—prospects for new voucher programs have never been better. The NEA, in spite of its post-ballot bravado, is on the defensive; like General Lee's army in the final year of the Civil War, it may be winning all the way to Appomattox.

The reason: Even in losing efforts, the arguments for vouchers are beginning to have a cumulative effect. Public schools aren't getting any better, and even more important, the hypocrisy of anti-choice forces is beginning to penetrate the public mind. Chelsea Clinton's enrollment at Washington's Sidwell Friends School was a high-profile confirmation of the strong predilection for private schooling on the part of parents who, in their professional and political lives, oppose private school choice for others. This practice goes well beyond the liberal elite; in a number of cities, public school teachers are twice as likely as the average family to send their own children to private schools. As Polly Williams—the black Milwaukee welfare mother turned state legislator who championed the country's only court-sanctioned voucher program—observes: "Bill Clinton shouldn't be the only person in public housing who gets to send his kid to private school."

Observers who wish to understand the future of the voucher movement must look beyond the state-wide referenda campaigns, which have produced a string of landslide losses, to the small but unmistakable signs of the movement's vitality. In the few places where small gains have been made, private school choice takes tenacious root. Ironically for imperial Republicans grown used to a perpetual hold on the presidency, the progress of private school choice may just revive one's faith in Federalism. The prospect of achieving radical ends by incremental means is emerging—provided pro-voucher forces cultivate patience and persistence.

Clinton Backpedaling

Polly Williams often waves around copies of a letter written in October 1990, one month after her Parental Choice Program began. "I'm fascinated by that proposal...." writes her correspondent. "I'm concerned that the traditional Democratic Party establishment has not given you more encouragement. The visionary is rarely embraced by the status quo."

The letter's author, then-Governor Bill Clinton, soon learned that private school choice was politically incorrect. Chastened by presidential ambition and the political realities of a potent public education lobby that would supply one in eight delegates to the Democratic National Convention—along with an army of door-knockers, envelope-stuffers and, ultimately, voters in the 1992 Presidential campaign—Clinton did an about-face on vouchers. On education policy, his New Democrat centrism took the form of support for "public-school only" choice. Yet support for even this half-measure evaporated upon entering the Oval Office; in Clinton's first speech to the NEA as president, he was already backpedaling. Choice—even the tepid public school choice candidate Clinton had talked about—was not mentioned.

In the nation's capitol, in year two of the Clinton presidency, the public education lobby's chokehold on choice is nearly complete. Beyond the occasional recorded "test-vote" on a pro-voucher amendment, there is no hope for Congressional action.

Yet the pent-up demand for public school reform has

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proved it will find some outlet. A spate of reforms including public-school choice, charter schools, and experiments to "contract out" to private educational entities, continue to gain ground. Minnesota, the state that triggered the charter school movement—which charters non-government groups to establish schools beyond the bureaucratic reach of the public education apparatus—is operating six schools this year. A private firm called Education Alternatives Incorporated has won a contract to run nine Baltimore city schools in one much watched experiment, and is actively seeking contracts in other cities. The for-profit Edison Project has won the right to run three of Massachusetts's 15 charter schools beginning in the fall of 1995. Students at Edison Schools will study 90 minutes per day and 30 days per year longer than their public school counterparts, and have computers installed at home at no extra cost to their parents. Other charter schools will experiment with new ways to reach and teach at-risk students; all told, 9 states and 100 schools will soon be experimenting with the charter concept.

SCHOOL CHOICE IS A CAMPAIGN ISSUE THAT GOES DIRECTLY TO THE PEOPLE.

Whether these reforms will make for radical changes in public education is less clear. On the positive side, public school choice, though limited to a choice between government schools, illustrates at least the principle of parental choice in action. The contract and charter school movements have the potential to demonstrate new routes to educational achievement, whether that means bringing new technologies into the classroom, or reviving an old-fashioned approach to the "three R's." Charter schools could also create a "supply" of schools for future voucher students.

Check the Fine Print

On the negative side, charter schools often prove to be independent in name only. Charter school enthusiasts are beginning to beware the fine print; "autonomy," for instance, sometimes does not extend to hiring-and-firing power over the public school teachers assigned to charter schools. In Michigan, opposition by the Michigan Education Association forced Governor John Engler to accept a stunted "charter school" proposal that limits sponsoring agencies to public school boards and state universities, and demands state-certification for all charter school teachers. To say the least, hopes for a truly fresh approach to education have been severely compromised.

Private school choice—vouchers that can be used at religious and other private schools—remains the one strategy with the capability of breaking free from the dead hand of bureaucracy and sparking revolutionary change. Banished from the Beltway and no longer transfixed by bully-pulpit praise for vouchers, a long-term strategy is now taking shape: Private school choice has begun its "long march" phase. The absence of a voucher advocate in the White House is almost a blessing; it is forcing the grassroots to grow.

At the state and local level, the push for private school choice is a three-dimensional effort comprised of ballot initiatives, legislation, and litigation. In some states, activity is minimal or non-existent on all fronts; in other states, pro-choicers mount multiple challenges to the public education status quo.

Initiatives

In spite of setbacks in Oregon in 1990, Colorado in 1992, and California's Proposition 174 in 1993, voucher initiatives remain a favorite of choice advocates. At this writing, several pro-voucher groups are collecting signatures to place private choice plans on state ballots in 1994; the most likely contests will come in Oregon and Arkansas. California choice advocates are undecided about a 1994 rematch. Some back a second run this year, while others, still smarting from 1993's lop-sided loss and arguing for time to recast their proposal, favor waiting until 1996.

Given the steady string of failures, what makes the referenda route so attractive? It offers advocates a chance to swing for the fences, to sweep away the status quo and convert an entire state to vouchers. Unlike legislation or litigation, this is a campaign that goes directly to the people, with all of its inherent attractions for activists committed to a cause.

The weakness of the strategy is that public teachers' unions play a mean power game, and so far they have furnished the cash and the cadres to deny vouchers victory at the ballot box. In California, the public education establishment spent more than $15 million to defeat the voucher initiative, much of it financed pick-pocket style from teachers' union dues paid by taxpayers. The campaign featured a good share of fear-mongering, such as voucher-funded Koresh-style "Rancho Apocalypse Academies" or schools run by witch covens. Anti-voucher forces' preference for fear over fact pre-dated the California campaign; during the Oregon campaign in 1990, choice opponents ran an ad panning a classroom filled with children wearing Ku Klux Klan hoods.

In any initiative campaign, the correlation of forces makes for long odds. Eager but comparatively unorganized parents groups are out-mobilized by professional and well-financed armies of public teacher unions that are active in every city and town. Poll after poll shows people favor private school choice, and yet time after time they vote against it.

Perhaps the problem isn't the process, but the initiatives themselves. Most ballot measures so far have been "all-or-nothing" reforms—asking voters to scrap the present system and convert to vouchers with a single click of a voting booth lever. Such sweeping reforms fly in the face of the innate caution of voters, and change the stakes of the vote they cast. Suddenly, instead of weighing vouchers as a sensible response to a monopolistic system, private school choice becomes a source of unease and uncertainty. What will happen to my children's school, many parents wonder; will it have the same quality of students, will its financial base change overnight?

Conservative pro-choicers especially ought to take a long second look at such a strategy. Consider for a mo-

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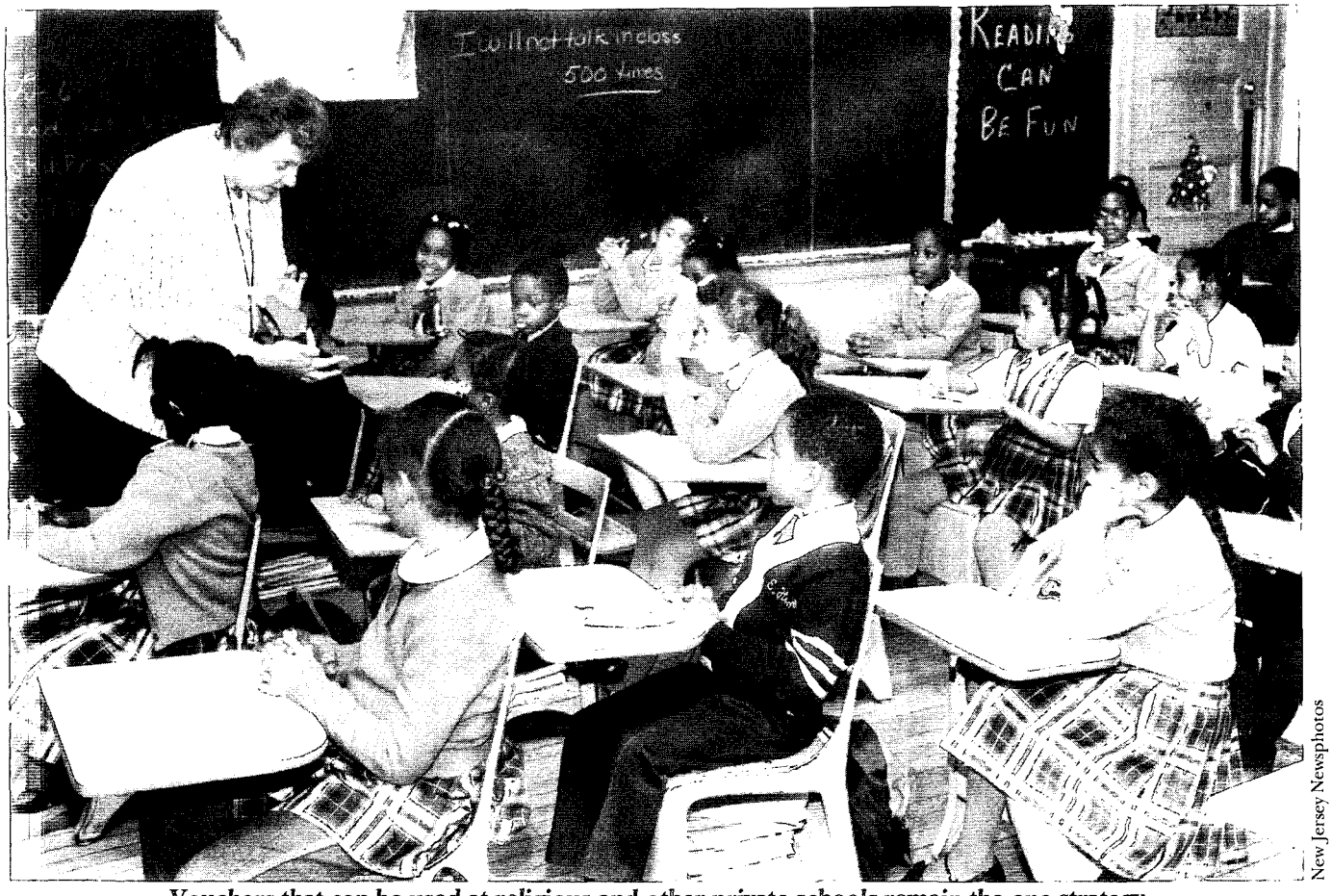

New Jersey Newsphotos

Vouchers that can be used at religious and other private schools remain the one strategy that might spark revolutionary change in education.

ment the preferred conservative approach to health-care reform. The Clinton plan is held up as a reckless gamble, putting at risk all that is good in health care in order to fix what all concede are worrisome shortcomings in need of reform. On this issue, the conservative approach is classic incrementalism; fix what's wrong, preserve what's right. Voters, quite rightly, are assumed to be averse to invitations to take a risk on reform.

Change the issue from health care to school vouchers, and the tables turn. California's ballot measure asked voters to embrace sweeping change. There was no income-cutoff for voucher eligibility, and a bare-minimum one-year waiting period before the 500,000-plus presently-enrolled private schoolers would become eligible for vouchers. When the time came to take the plunge, Californians got cold feet. Exit polling revealed significant general support for vouchers—even among voters who rejected the particulars of Proposition 174.

Has the time come for a targeted effort—programs that are means-tested for low-income families, or otherwise limited to "demonstration projects?" And assuming there is merit in such an incrementalist approach, why tailor vouchers to income level?

For the simple reason that Americans do not hold all public schools to be equal—or, more to the point, equally bad. Starting with near unanimous agreement in the bankruptcy of our central city public schools—the very schools that possess a near-total economic monopoly on their students—consensus on the comparatively poor quality of public schools starts to fray somewhere on the way to the suburbs. Among conservative-minded suburbanites, vouchers command a certain ideological allegiance. But it is more a matter of head than heart: Vouchers ought to be given a chance—but not if it means destroying their schools.

Enter the law of unintended consequences: All-or-nothing initiatives hand school choice's enemies an opening to play on conservative instincts to defeat reform. For the defenders of the status quo, the result is both cynical and satisfying. In the California campaign, the public education lobby was able to strike a chord with fiscally-conservative Californians, fearful of the prospect of an open-ended claim on a state treasury already strapped for cash. In addition, the absence of any income-cut off even at the highest levels left choice vulnerable to caricature as tax relief for prep-school parents. Exit polls indicate the initiative could not muster majority support even among self-described conservatives.

Is there a trend toward incrementalism in upcoming initiatives? Ballot results from the 1994 votes in Arkansas and Oregon may provide at least a partial answer. Like California's Proposition 174, Arkansas' ballot initiative is open to families of all income levels; unlike California, with its one-year waiting period for families with children already enrolled in private school, private and religious school students will be eligible immediately for vouchers

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if the Arkansas initiative becomes law.

In Oregon, voucher schools will be required to fill the first 20 percent of their seats with low-income children, defined as students from families with income no higher than 150 percent of the poverty line. After that, all families—regardless of income—are eligible for vouchers. On its face, this plan seems more likely to satisfy fairness concerns and, for that matter, to produce—voluntarily—schools with more melting-pot potential than the most ill-conceived, command-and-control desegregationist schemes. Yes, the Oregon initiative is too complex to be printed on a bumper sticker; but the hope is to sacrifice simplicity in order to gain voter support.

Legislative Majorities

What about passing a program the old-fashioned way, by marshalling a majority in the state legislature? Like the initiative approach, and unlike litigation, legislative victory establishes popular legitimacy for vouchers. But this approach suffers from the same problem that has plagued the referenda efforts: The public education lobby has a chokehold on most state legislatures.

Even the one legislative success to withstand a court challenge, Wisconsin's 1990 voucher victory, is sobering testimony to the political obstacles to passage. Polly Williams' voucher plan met with implacable opposition in the legislature's education committees. Williams was able

LAST YEAR THE MILWAUKEE SANITATION WORKERS ASKED FOR A $200 SCHOOL VOUCHER AS PART OF THEIR COMPENSATION PACKAGE.

to win only with an adroit parliamentary maneuver: With the clock ticking toward the session's close, Williams tacked on an amendment to the must-pass Wisconsin budget act. By the time the public education lobby knew what was going on, it was too late to mount an opposition campaign.

If Milwaukee had the element of surprise in its favor, other legislators seeking to replicate Milwaukee's success will face state teachers' lobbies and their political proxies who are very much forewarned and forearmed.

Not surprisingly, surveys reveal a number of states where voucher legislation remains bottled up in subcommittee. Yet pent-up pressures for reform suggest 1995 may be a breakout year for vouchers.

The best bet is New Jersey, where Jersey City Mayor Bret Schundler rode into office on a strong pro-voucher platform, and has since acquired the additional political clout that comes from Republican majorities in New Jersey's House and Senate, and a pro-voucher Governor in Christine Todd Whitman. Jersey City's schools, whose poor academic performance has put them in state receivership, has managed to produce failure at ever-rising costs, now an eye-popping $9,200 per public school pupil. If ever a system was ripe for reform, this is it. Schundler hopes to steer his pilot program—trimmed back from $5,000 to $500 per student—through the legislature and into law before the end of 1994.

With the short legislative sessions already over in many states, 1995 will see new efforts to reverse recent near-misses. In 1994, Arizona narrowly missed becoming the first state to institute state-wide private school choice. As in Wisconsin, the bill enjoyed support from across the political spectrum, backed by everyone from the Arizona Hispanic Forum to Barry Goldwater. Yet, in the final vote, the only two Democrats to vote in favor of vouchers were Linda Aguirre, a former public school teacher, and Joe Eddie Lopez, both Representatives from Phoenix. The bill passed the Arizona House, but fell three votes short in the Senate. The challenge in 1995 will be holding the private choice coalition together, and finding the handful of Senate votes to get the bill to Governor Fife Symington for signature. If passed, Arizona's pilot choice program would provide vouchers to 8,000 children by the year 2000.

Pennsylvania is another state gearing up for a second run at vouchers. Legislators there came close to passing a state-wide voucher plan in 1991, getting a bill through the Senate only to see it stall in the House. Twenty-seven of the 28 Senate votes from 1991—26 are needed for passage—are still serving; the challenge now is to peel away rank and file Democrat support in the face of staunch opposition from House Democratic leadership. Pennsylvania's program—open to all schools, whether public, private, or religious—would be capped at net incomes of $75,000: Plenty of room for middle-class support (in contrast to mid-to-upper income voters in other states, suburban Pennsylvanians are strong for school choice). Chances for passage in 1994 are succumbing to the pressures of election year politicking; passage in 1995 would allow vouchers to be used in the 1995-96 school year.

Still, the next advance may come in the birthplace of the private school choice movement. In March 1994, Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist joined Polly Williams to introduce an amendment that would open the program—now limited to a dozen non-sectarian schools—to all religious schools within Milwaukee.

The 1994 legislative session ended before any action proved possible. In 1995, a new push will find anti-choice Democrats control Wisconsin's key education committees, but voucher advocates promise a hearts-and-minds campaign, with public hearings allowing parents to make their voices heard. In Milwaukee, a city beset by a certain "choice fever"—the city's sanitation workers last year asked for $200 school vouchers as part of their compensation package—the strategy just might work.

If it does, victory will bring vindication for choice proponents who have made their fill of compromises. In 1990, Milwaukee's Parental Choice started small: Just 341 children used vouchers in the program's first year. Choice supporters had to accept a plan confined to 1 percent of the school-age population in Milwaukee—even though more than 50 percent of the city's students met the program's income eligibility levels; they had to limit eligible schools to a few dozen non-sectarian schools—to the exclusion of Milwaukee's 80-plus relig-

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ious schools. But the program gained a foothold, built a constituency of satisfied parents—and a waiting list of families seeking vouchers for their own children. Evidence is that the program's popularity among parents is attracting political converts to the cause. If Milwaukee succeeds in expanding Parental Choice while other states continue to strike out on state-wide programs, it will be a strong lesson in favor of incrementalism.

Court Battles

While others prepare for statehouse battles or campaigns to bring millions of choice supporters to the ballot box, some voucher advocates believe the next victory will be won by a handful of people prevailing in court.

As choice backers know from the Milwaukee experience, any legislative victory will trigger litigation. The education establishment has several lines of defense, not least of which is a phalanx of lawyers itching to put another brick in the wall of church-state separation. The public education lobby can count on support from the ACLU, and often the NAACP, old-hands ready to enter amicus briefs at a moment's notice.

The legal issues—particularly those posed by voucher plans that include religious schools—will have to be resolved, sooner or later. As a result, some conservative public interest lawyers advocate a "first-use" litigation strategy; in effect, they see the courts as a way to establish vouchers and obtain a legal imprimatur at the same time.

Clint Bolick, who earned his stripes defending Polly Williams' program for Landmark Legal Foundation, has gone on at the Institute for Justice to bring three cases with potential to advance private school choice. In Los Angeles and Chicago, Bolick represents low-income parents suing state public education authorities. Bolick's notion is to bootstrap from rulings that recognize a right to "equal educational opportunity" to a remedy in the form of vouchers. In the California case, filed less than a month after the 1992 L.A. riots, a trial court victory for the South-Central L.A. parent-plaintiffs was reversed on appeal. After an expanded suit was dismissed, the parents are back at the state court of appeals seeking another chance at trial. In Chicago, the case has yet to progress to the trial stage, with a dismissal presently on appeal.

A Precedent for Vouchers

Court rulings in either Chicago or Los Angeles would not set precedent for other states. In contrast, Bolick's third case *could* set federal precedent for vouchers.

At issue is the constitutionality of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico's 1993 law granting vouchers to any family earning $18,000 or less, the first post-Milwaukee legislative success for private school choice. When the new program drew a law suit—with help from the ACLU and Americans United for Separation of Church and State—Bolick's Institute for Justice intervened on the side of parents.

Can Puerto Rico's program withstand scrutiny? Precedent is there. Bolick notes that a tuition tax credit, favored by wealthier Puerto Ricans who send their children to private or religious schools, has been on the books since 1954; it has never been challenged. In addition, delegates to Puerto Rico's Constitutional Convention—the body

UPI/Bettmann

A public school under police guard in Brooklyn. The failure of inner-city public schools has driven many middle-class parents to reassess the school choice issue.

that put in place the Commonwealth's strictures against aid to private or religious *schools*—acknowledged the practice of scholarship grants to *students* for use in private colleges and professional schools. In principle, Puerto Rico's new private school choice law sits well within such precedents.

Yet Puerto Rico has already suffered its first setback. In late April, a Superior Court judge struck down the private and religious portions of the voucher program, leaving only public school choice intact. Parent advocates of choice have petitioned for expedited appeal, direct to Puerto Rico's Supreme Court, asking for a stay to prevent children from being removed from their choice schools. If Puerto Rico's Supreme Court reaches First Amendment issues—even to rule against the voucher program—the case could end up in the U.S. Supreme Court.

In contrast to Bolick's trio of cases, a Georgia case filed in June 1994 attempts to breathe new life into a voucher law already on the books. In 1961, the Georgia state legislature—scrambling to devise alternatives to evade post-*Brown* v. *Board of Education* orders to desegregate public schools—passed a voucher statute that gave 1,200 children funds from the state treasury to enroll at the private school of their choice. Unused for 30 years, the statute assumed dead letter status. Discovered by Atlanta attorney and choice activist Glenn Delk—the voucher law happened to be on the facing page of a different statute he was researching—the Jim Crow-era voucher law had never been repealed.

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Delk and other voucher advocates are now dusting off the old statute, with poor, inner-city minorities first in line for vouchers. Ironically, the 1961 law passed with the help of current Georgia Governor Zell Miller—Democrat and staunch opponent of private school vouchers—who cast his vote for the Jim Crow law as a young state Representative.

Finally, there is Landmark Legal Foundation's new Milwaukee parents' suit. Representing five Milwaukee parents whose children are on the waiting list for the city's non-denominational choice schools, lead lawyer Mark Bredemeier is making a "free exercise" case to allow these parents to use vouchers to send their children to religious schools. This case, coupled with the rekindled legislative effort, opens a second front that is guaranteed to keep Milwaukee at the leading edge of the private school-choice movement.

Without doubt, a court victory in one or more of these cases would galvanize the private choice movement. Still, not every friend of vouchers favors the litigation track; after years of arguing the merits of strict construction, concerns about a kind of right-wing Warrenism haunt conservative efforts to win in courts what Democrat-dominated legislatures deny them. But a case can be made that court-won limits on the worst excesses of liberalism is an intelligent and honorable path. Failure to regain lost legal ground would consign the country to periods of liberal activism punctuated by conservative stasis, introducing a permanent leftward tilt to Constitutional law. In any event, for parents—especially poor parents whose children are consigned to inner-city public schools—courts may be the only refuge from a political system that gives voice and veto power to a public education lobby whose first instinct is to serve itself instead of its students.

The Rise of Private Choice

Some pro-choicers sidestep the legal and legislative thickets entirely. The year after Polly Williams's breakthrough, Pat Rooney, CEO of Indianapolis-based Golden Rule Insurance Company, conceived the idea to start a similar program, with one significant difference: It would depend entirely on private donations. Rooney's program has taken root and has been replicated. All told, nearly 5,000 children in 11 cities nationwide receive privately funded tuition grants to enroll at the school of their choice—public, private or religious. At a combined annual cost of $4.4 million—less than double the $2.5 million pro-voucher advocates spent on the losing California ballot campaign—these programs are intent on mass-producing small-scale success.

The largest program, again in the voucher hotbed of Milwaukee, has 2,400 students; PAVE, supported primarily by the Bradley Foundation, is actually three times the size of Polly Williams's tax-supported Parental Choice Program. Douglas Dewey, co-founder of the Washington-based National Scholarship Center, whose organization also tracks the development of the privately-funded programs, puts the emphasis on immediacy: "Fighting the system can become an end in itself. We looked around and said, instead of trying to change the system, let's just start helping children now."

Initially, privately-funded programs aimed at leveraging public policy. But increasingly, newer entrants are agnostic, and in some cases philosophically opposed to government-funded programs of any kind. The split, while philosophical, is hardly fatal. San Antonio's CEO program has even taken to "franchising" its approach, spawning new programs in Austin, Texas and Oakland, California. The idea is to create a core constituency or cadre of parents who see first-hand the difference vouchers can make—parents willing to push for the "institutionalization" of the voucher approach by pressing state legislatures for a share of public funds. It hasn't happened yet. Nevertheless, pro-voucher advocates will be watching Milwaukee in particular to see whether privately-funded voucher parents join the public push for an expanded Parental Choice Program.

Meanwhile, these privately-funded programs continue to be vouchers' growth industry, with nine more cities planning grants for the 1994-95 school year. Since these are purely private efforts, anti-voucher forces are powerless to stop them.

Emerging Alliances

In contrast to Chairman Mao's move to the countryside, choice's stronghold may prove to be urban "central cities." If choice has a weakness, it is in Republican suburbia, where parents with checkbook choice—the economic wherewithal to buy homes in more desirable public school districts—see vouchers as a potential threat to schools they like. As the Manhattan Institute's John Miller reports, vouchers' popularity declines as one moves up the socio-economic ladder. GOP legislators, following their ideological disposition toward individual freedom and market solutions, can generally be counted on to cast their votes. But too often the passion isn't there.

Increasingly, that passion is found in the central cities where the bankruptcy of public education is painfully evident. Polls consistently show strong minority support for private school choice. In Polly Williams's program, 93 percent of the children attending Choice Schools on vouchers are African American or Hispanic. Hispanic and African-American voters—particularly those urban, low-income residents locked in to public schools that cannot ensure their students educational opportunity or even physical safety—comprise a natural constituency for vouchers. Choice advocates should target these groups for coalition building.

And increasingly, they are doing so. In Arizona, the recent battle for choice put the spotlight on two Hispanic legislators, Linda Aguirre and Joe Eddie Lopez, both Democrats bucking their leadership on an issue they saw as critical to their constituents. Georgia's leading legislator on choice, State Senator Roy Allen of Savannah, stepped down from office and changed parties after his Democratic colleagues scuttled his voucher bill. In Connecticut, another Hispanic legislator, Democrat Eddie Garcia, wants choice for the inner-city Hartford families he represents. In Connecticut and Pennsylvania, civil rights stalwart Roy Innis of the Congress of Racial Equality backs vouchers as an alternative to public schools he sees consigning minority youth to failure.

Long a favorite Republican reform, vouchers increasingly draw bi-partisan support. Public officials in both

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The Milwaukee Journal

Milwaukee school-choice champion Polly Williams with constituents. Says Williams, "Bill Clinton shouldn't be the only person in public housing who gets to send his kid to private school."

parties are beginning to learn that—in spite of the public education lobby's threats—there is small price to pay and considerable support that accrues to politicians who adopt a pro-school choice stance. John Norquist, Milwaukee's Democratic mayor, offers a case in point. He freely admits he was an opponent of vouchers until Polly Williams changed his mind. Now, he backs the expansion of the program to religious schools. In early 1992, his statement that the existing public education system "ought to be scrapped" drew the ire of the educrats; that November, he coasted to a re-election victory. Big city mayors and legislators who watch the political stock of Jersey City's Schundler and Norquist are certain to take note.

There is a lesson here. Private school choice is as much an *urban* policy as *education* policy. In a political landscape full of fissures, private school choice offers a firm foothold where the market philosophy of free-enterprisers and the character concerns of socially conservative minority parents meet.

As much as any other issue, private school choice has the capability to break free groups that liberals have long considered a captive constituency, and suggest a new political alignment for African-American and Hispanic voters. Like public housing vouchers, child care tax credits and other reform initiatives that put both public funds and control in the hands of individuals, private school choice strengthens the family and weakens the state.

The Long March

Official Washington's near total silence on private school choice is deceiving. The intellectual battle is over: Choice has long since won the war of ideas. Everyone—even most grizzled partisan of government-run schools—seeks to wear the reform mantle; no one in any sizable American city wishes to rise to the defense of public schools that are violence-ridden and value-free. As the pocket-sized debate "cheat-sheet" issued by California's Proposition 174 opponents stated: "Tip #1: Don't defend or debate public school performance. Stick to why this proposition is bad."

As in the old communist regimes, power remains even after ideology has lost its ability to convince. Anyone in need of proof needs only to examine the leading argument of public education's defenders: Allow choice, and you will destroy the public schools. The abject implication—that public school students are literally a captive audience—seems to be lost on public education's defenders. The public schools' Maginot Line is in fact the Berlin Wall.

The political power that holds Washington to the official public school orthodoxy weakens as the war for private school choice is fought in the states. There, public school choice, charter schools, and the contracting movement are all opening cracks that promise the monolith's meltdown. For vouchers, the prognosis is rich in paradox: After years of looking to Washington's Republican insurgents to lead the charge, private school choice may advance when its Washington allies are in retreat. The president the public education lobby looked to to strangle private school choice may prove powerless to prevent its victory. Typical of the cloistered world of Washington, word has yet to reach the capital.

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GURUS OF GAB

Talk Radio Stars Are Changing America

DAVID BRUDNOY, RAOUL LOWERY CONTRERAS, BLANQUITA CULLUM, MARLIN MADDOUX, JON MATTHEWS, MIKE ROSEN, MIKE SIEGEL, ERROL SMITH, ARMSTRONG WILLIAMS

In an increasingly bureaucratic, mobile, and even unfriendly America, talk radio functions as the last neighborhood in town. We communicate, kitchen-table style, with some of all types of Americans and they with us. We are the lightning rods for anger and sadness and views ranging from the enlightened to the moronic. We find our audiences often as youths and grow with them into adulthood; I think of 10-year-old Seth who called me in 1976 when I began on the air, and who periodically has checked in from college, law school, and now from his home with his kids in the background.

At one level, talk radio entertains. Its hosts, like its audiences, run the full gamut—from insightful to inane. Some intend only to shock or amuse. At another level, talk radio informs. It can expose ideas for what they are, bring important facts to light, give a hearing to all sides of an issue. In a word, educate. Finally, talk radio activates. It can move people to get involved, locally or nationally, in the issues of the day. It can prompt a listener to invade the arena of ideas—and the politics they generate—and to become a player, a participant, a citizen.

No, talk radio hosts are not preachers, and our programs are not revival meetings. But with one in six Americans listening regularly to talk radio, we're both a resource and a soapbox for millions. The popularity of talk radio reminds us that Americans still prefer talking to fighting. And though our national conversations are not always civil, talk radio helps ensure that at least we'll keep having them.

Policy Review has asked several of my colleagues to explain how they have helped educate and activate listeners, whether on issues in their own backyards, or coming out of Washington, D.C. These are their stories.

-- David Brudnoy
WBZ-AM, Boston, MA

RAOUL LOWERY CONTRERAS

KOGO, San Diego, CA

At one of the many funerals I attend in my extended family of hundreds, a grandmotherly woman held my hand in both of hers, looked at me with tears in her eyes, and said in Spanish, "You say the things that have been in my heart for years. Thank you."

Recently a city government executive invited me to be the commencement speaker at the graduation of the Leadership Institute, a foundation funded course for Mexican-American business and professional people that teaches leadership.

Welcome to some of the fringe benefits of hosting a daily talk radio show aimed at Latinos.

Six years ago, when I decided to try my hand at writing and sold my first op-ed articles, I thought I had inched into the opinion-shaping world of mass media. To some extent, I had. But my recent move into radio—with a six-day-a-week talk show on a station with a potential audience of 20 million people—dwarfs the impact of newspaper columns.

Talk radio provides an incredible "bully pulpit" for talk show hosts. My favorite topic, one of special concern to so many Southern Californians, is economic development for Latinos. Unlike so many Latin-American leaders, I am very critical of welfare on my show and the effect it has on Mexican-American families.

More than that, I am trying to bring a message of hope to the Spanish-speaking community. In the 12 years of the Reagan-Bush presidencies, the number of Latino-owned businesses increased nationally from about 100,000 to over 300,000—the greatest economic leap forward of any group in American history. In California alone, according to the First Interstate Bank, there are 135,000 Latino-owned businesses, with 87,000 in Southern California.

Many people simply don't like these facts. One evening I launched a program with a presentation of why Mexican Americans should be conservative free enterprisers. One listener was infuriated by my views because she said that a Mexican Republican is like being a black Republican, i.e., bad.

But whatever some opinion leaders or others may think about Mexican Republicans, the facts are that 75 percent of all Mexican Americans live above the official poverty level and most own their own homes. Eighty-two percent of Mexican-American males work, more than any other group in America. Most native-born Mexican Americans are high-chool graduates and their level of

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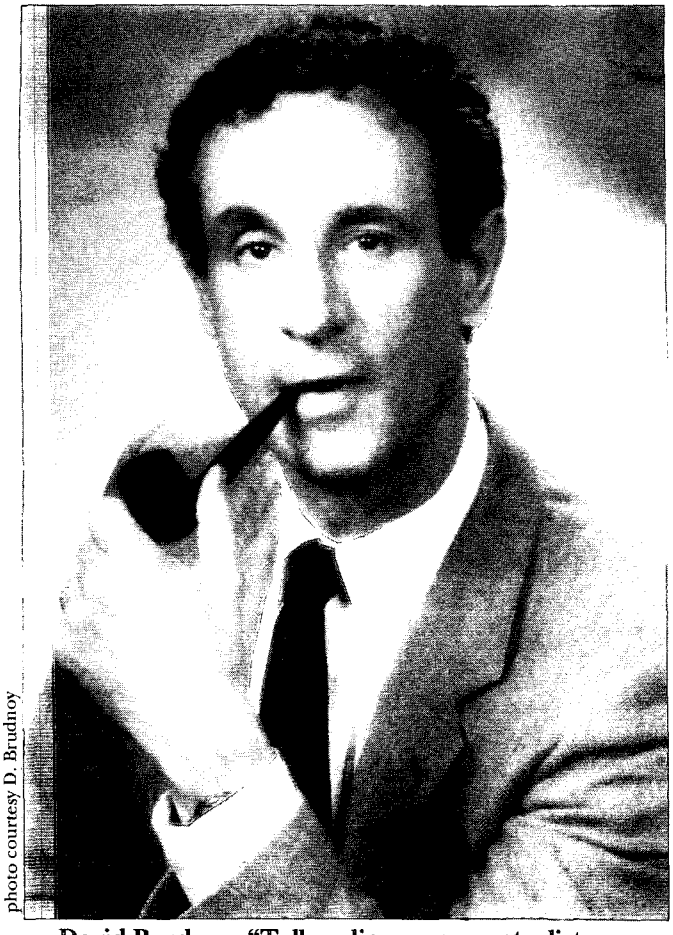

photo courtesy D. Brudnoy

David Brudnoy: "Talk radio can prompt a listener to invade the arena of ideas—and the politics ideas generate."

photo courtesy R. Lowery Contreras

Raoul Lowrey Contreras: "Talk radio provides an incredible 'bully pulpit.' I am trying to bring a message of hope to the Spanish-speaking community."

college education approaches that of black America.

By constantly referring to economic progress and the number of Latino businesses in the country, I am trying to make an obvious point—progress is possible. Latino business has flourished over the past dozen years, along with Latino political power.

This is where the influence of talk radio comes in: Until I started broadcasting, much of the information I debate with my audience was hidden in reports from the Census Bureau and in economic journals. Now, the subject of economic independence and how to reach it is discussed regularly.

Talk radio also allows you to take issues out of the abstract and get practical. I have Latino businessmen join me on the air to describe how they started in business—usually with little or no capital—and how they keep their businesses profitable.

Recently I needled Mayor Golding into organizing a one-stop permit office to help entrepreneurs find all the information they need to start a business. A simple step like that can go a long way.

Like other groups that have come to this nation of opportunities, the Spanish-speaking community wants to participate in the American dream. Maybe that's why the Mexican-American woman—the one who scrubbed floors all her life in rich peoples' homes so that all six of her children could attend universities and enter the American society as professionals—tearfully thanked me for speaking her words for her.

If we don't speak for her, who will?

Blanquita Cullum

Syndicated, Richmond, VA

As a national talk-show host, I've talked to more Congressmen and Senators than just about anyone, with the possible exception of a D.C. lobbyist. While many of the political leaders I invite on the air are good apples, much of the bushel remains rotten.

I've discovered that after you strip away their polished one-liners and dubious double-talk, I am conversing with an out-of-touch, arrogant, often condescending, royal wanna-be. Politicians are well aware that they control an enormous amount of money, prestige, and power. Their campaign managers and press secretaries will try to keep the conceit low-key, but when challenged on an issue, the politician will often instinctively respond by belittling their opposer.

A prominent Virginia politician was a guest on my show last year when he was up for re-election. He had the unfortunate handicap of being both a Democrat incumbent during the Clinton administration, and facing a Virginia public that voted for Bush in 1992. The Clinton budget proposal had just been approved by Congress.

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photo courtesy B. Cullum

Blanquita Cullum with guests Charlton Heston and Virginia Governor George Allen: "Talk radio has given voice to the previously mute majority, and the people have spoken."

When I solicited my guest's budget opinion, this conversation actually ensued:

Candidate: I confess that if I had a chance to vote on the president's budget last week, I think I would have voted against it.

Blanquita: You think, or you would have?

Candidate: Well, I think I would have.

I'm not making up one word; "Well, I think I would have," actually came out of the candidate's mouth. When I pointed out how unpopular the Clinton budget was among Virginians, he responded, "I'm not here defending the president's plan, because I've already made my position on it pretty clear." If he believes that his position qualifies as "clear," he probably also considers the 1040 a breeze and the Rubik's Cube a snap.

Later in the interview, a caller asked the candidate what his stand was on Outcome Based Education. He hemmed and hawed, and finally claimed that he hadn't decided where he stands yet on the issue. He elaborated, and stated that his non-position wasn't really a problem, since in a democracy unpopular ideas are routinely defeated. A caller named Sherry challenged him:

Sherry: I think as a political candidate and having held office for four years [the candidate] has a responsibility to know about Outcome Based Education, and to have an opinion about it, and to make a statement on where he stands. The candidate also shouldn't be so naive as to think that the Department of Education cannot impose educational reform on parents who object.

Candidate: Sherry, Outcome Based Education is one of those many things being debated now, nationally and in Virginia, and I'll have an opinion when the debate is finished. I have many opinions of different pieces of it, and you shouldn't be so naive to assume that the Department of Education can impose anything....

I asked Sherry if my guest had satisfactorily explained his position. She responded, "I would like to hear where he stands before the election and not after."

I then asked the candidate if he planned to alter his opinion on Outcome Based Education. He said, "Well, I'm going to continue to work on the things that I think are important in education reform."

The term "political arrogance" is quickly becoming repetitive, and Americans are catching on to this verbal sleight of hand. Talk radio is giving a voice to the previously mute majority, and the people have spoken. Many liberals are perplexed by the growing market for the conservative media, but by using the evening news as a left-wing doormat, they have unwittingly created demand for a right-wing product. Many politicians start to behave, not because they see the light, but because they feel the heat—the heat generated by talk radio.

MARLIN MADDOUX

USA Radio Network, Dallas, TX

On February 14, 1994 a home-school parent from New Jersey called the office of Representative Dick Armey, R-TX, to ask about a suspicious-looking provision in the upcoming education bill known as HR 6. Over the next several days, I watched our program and other organizations amplify that single parent's call into a political sonic boom felt around the nation and in Washington. And frankly, I wasn't surprised.

The parents' concern: An amendment that could be used to force home-school parents to be certified, putting home school methods and content under the thumb of the very educational system they were trying to escape. Armey's office called the Home School Legal Defense Fund for advice. On February 15, the Home School Legal Defense Fund said the danger was clear and present.

In a matter of days, the grassroots of pro-family America—relying heavily on talk radio programs around the country—set off a political earthquake that shook Capitol Hill until the cupola almost fell off the dome. We kept our program packed with critiques from politicians, home-school leaders, and religious freedom lawyers. Other talk show hosts did the same, urging their audiences to tell Congress they were opposed to this federal power grab over family life.

House members' phone and fax lines were jammed, as some offices reported thousands of calls in one day. The liberals retreated, one of them pleading, "the goal is to spare every member of Congress another weekend of phone calls." The amendment, which otherwise could have easily sailed through to approval, died a violent death.

Phone calls. Washington politicians are beginning to pay attention to phone calls. America called them about gays in the military. America called about the "fairness" doctrine. Why? Because grassroots America now realizes it must go over the heads of the traditional media and institutions to demand action.

Consider the immediacy of talk radio. We give instant information, receive instant feedback, and can generate instant response. When Christian or conservative leaders have a message to get out, they can access—and mobilize—literally millions of listeners in minutes.

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photo courtesy M. Maddoux

Marlin Maddoux: "We're in the business of selling an enduring worldview, a more profound task than the occasional instant jolts we give decision makers."

photo courtesy J. Matthews

Jon Matthews: "Doing a three-hour talk show is like being the target for a carnival knife thrower. You hope he just gets close without scoring any direct hits."

There also are cultural and social factors at work. Our audience is composed of activist, pro-family, Christian conservatives who believe that America's future is in jeopardy because of a shift away from the Judeo-Christian worldview. These listeners are moral and economic conservatives whose ranks are growing.

At the same time, Christian conservatives increasingly are abandoning the notion of "spiritual" and "secular" dimensions to life. To them, everything is seen through a spiritual lens—even the morally messy world of politics. There is a greater willingness to apply Christian principles to political issues and the responsibilities of citizenship. And as Christian conservatives become more sophisticated and active, their political effectiveness will increase, and talk radio will continue to serve as a vital outlet for them.

This means more than creating an agenda of daily plebiscites, a Perot-like scenario the Founders would have abhorred. Much more important is the ongoing daily dialogue we provide to millions of Americans with our Christian and conservative guests. We're in the business of selling an enduring worldview, a much more profound task than the occasional instant jolts we give decision makers. From New York City to Stockton, California our mission is information, persuasion, and mobilization.

JON MATTHEWS

KPRC Radio, Houston, TX

Caller: So Jon, how many slums did you drive through this morning?

Jon: What makes you think I drove through any slums?

Caller: Because I have to everyday. It's because of people like you who oppose zoning that prevent me from living in a decent neighborhood.

Jon: My opposition to zoning has nothing to do with your neighborhood's condition. If you don't like it, why don't you and your neighbors get together and do something about it?

Caller: Because we can't.

Jon: Then don't expect government to bail you out.

So began my show one morning last year during Houston's debate on zoning. There were many other clashes like that.

It may seem odd that the fourth largest city in the nation is not zoned, but Houston has always been that way. Arguments that zoning would increase property values and help direct growth have never won out—two previous attempts to zone the city failed.

The latest effort was hatched amid the usual cloak-and-dagger politics. The city council and the planning and zoning commission had determined that zoning was going to become a reality. Sure, they held public hearings, but there wasn't to be any city-wide vote on the issue. There was a serious lack of education over the impact of zoning as well, and a majority of residents were in favor.

As I personally began to oppose zoning on the air, I ran afoul of some of the more powerful political interests in Houston. Almost daily, I was besieged by callers both pro and con. City officials would call and accuse me of lying.

This is the beauty of talk radio: You can inform people quickly about an issue, help them hear all of the arguments, and then act. I had representatives from both sides of the zoning issue on the program. What became clear was that zoning would give government more control over an individual's private property. It would mean that churches could be prevented from expanding or building, or property-owners could be kept from adding rooms to their homes. Often I simply would ask my listeners if they wanted a government bureaucrat to determine the future use of their property.

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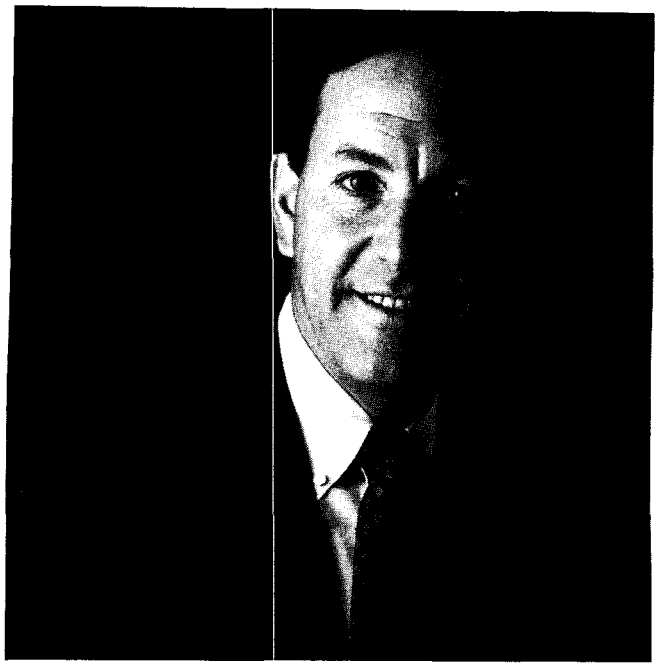

photo courtesy M. Rosen

Mike Rosen: "Talk radio has a way of letting lawmakers know that their constituents are really watching them."

As the on-air debate raged, two grass-roots organizations led a city-wide campaign against zoning. I worked with them in promoting a petition to put the question on the ballot in November. We got more than 20,000 signatures for the petition. The zoning plan was defeated 52 percent to 48 percent. Interestingly, the city council member who led the zoning charge failed to get enough support to seek another term; he is now back in private life, presumably enjoying his property rights.

Doing a three-hour daily talk show is a lot like being the target for the carnival knife thrower. You hope he just gets close without scoring any direct hits. Nevertheless, it's a great source of pride for me when listeners call and say that until they started listening to me they never voted—but that now they're registered and would get involved. That's critical, because we are governed only with our consent. And until each of us gets involved and votes on issues that concern us, we'll end up consenting to a lot of things we'll regret in the morning.

MIKE ROSEN

KOA Radio, Denver, CO

No issue hits people closer to home than the education of their children. In Colorado, about two-thirds of all tax dollars are spent on education. The combination of people's concern for their children and their money makes education a natural for discussion on talk radio. The hottest element of this topic in recent months has been "outcome-based education" (OBE), the latest buzzword in public school circles.

Of all the horrendous gimmicks, from the new math to open classrooms, inflicted on our children in recent years, OBE is the absolute worst. Actually, OBE isn't even a new idea. It's merely a warmed-over version of Dr. Benjamin Bloom's experiment with something called "mastery learning," which was tried and failed in the Chicago schools 15 years ago.

The curriculum is laden with behavior modification exercises, trendy liberal values and a pervasive bias toward a collectivist approach to social interaction. Educrats call this "affective" learning, geared toward emotions, feelings and behavior. Given short shrift, as usual, is traditional "cognitive" learning, focusing on basic academics.

I saw a bumper sticker recently that summed it up neatly: "Educators don't experiment on lab animals, they use children." The OBE virus has quietly infiltrated public schools all over the country in varying degrees and under a variety of names. (Private schools don't seem interested in it. You don't suppose there's a message there?) Colorado is no exception. When it comes to public discussion of OBE, educrats have employed the "mushroom strategy" in dealing with parents and potential critics outside the system: Keep them in the dark, and cover them with fertilizer.

This is one of the reasons we need talk radio—to ferret out these issues and make them understandable to a large audience. I was alerted to OBE a couple of years ago by some of my radio listeners, and began doing programs about it. Like Clinton's health care plan, the more people heard about OBE, the less they liked it. In the Littleton School District, the last board election was a referendum on OBE vs. Back-to-Basics. I had candidates of both persuasions on my show for a freewheeling debate. With a record turnout, the "basics" slate beat the OBE incumbents—supported by the teachers union—by a 2-1 margin. They now control the board.

In addition to clarifying issues, talk radio has a way of letting lawmakers know that their constituents are really watching them. State educrats, for example, had hoped to hijack a bill in the Colorado legislature designed to initiate statewide student performance standards—and turn it into a trojan horse for OBE. Normally, the teachers union lobbyists would have guided it through to their satisfaction. We focused the talk radio spotlight on this bill while it was in committee. Savvy listeners called their legislators.

I had the bill's sponsor, Representative Pat Sullivan, on my program to state unequivocally that the bill was intended to impose objective academic standards, not OBE "outcomes." Subsequently, all references to "outcomes" in the bill were stricken.

As a follow-up, I put the question to Governor Roy Romer, a Democrat, during one of his regular monthly appearances on my show. I asked if anything in the bill, which he had signed into law, mandated OBE, mastery learning, behavioral outcomes, a departure from letter grades or any such things. This was his response: "*Absolutely not* . . . what we're into is hard content. HARD CONTENT!" Though the battle continues, the OBE forces in Colorado are in retreat.

MIKE SIEGEL

KVI Radio, Seattle, WA

Talk radio has become the primary voice for protecting the sovereign power of the people. Most politicians

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ignore the people. Talk radio reminds them who's boss under our Constitution.

The legislative process is broken in the state of Washington. We can no longer redress our grievances through the legislature. That is why my radio talk program is dedicated to passage of meaningful legislation by ballot initiative. We are literally empowering the people to do what the legislature and governor refuse to do.

During the past five years in Seattle and Western Washington state, we have demonstrated the impact of talk radio on public issues. Campaigns run through my program have led to:

- tighter laws against sexual predators;
- elimination of a department of revenue proposal to tax charitable auctions;
- elimination of a $1 million proposal for a day care center for Department of Labor and Industries workers;
- passage of a bill authorizing the state auditor to complete state audits as he can in 49 other states.

The most dramatic impact of our program was during 1993 when we spearheaded the drive for three ballot measures by initiative. Two were tax limitation proposals. Judy Nix, coordinator of tax limitation proposal 601, said the initiative would never have made it to the ballot without my program.

Constant public participation in our campaign proved crucial: More than 182,000 signatures were required, funds for the campaign were limited, and the mainstream media paid only modest attention to the effort.

First, we had to get the initiative on the ballot. One of the ways we activated people was to have a "business location of the day." Each day we announced a different business in a different area of the state where people could pick up initiatives to sign. Different areas of the state actually started competing with each other to see which could get more signatures.

We also staged an auction, at which I agreed to be auctioneer, to raise money for the initiative. The program helped raise thousands of dollars, while mobilizing tens of thousands of people to sign and distribute petitions, donate money, and phone state legislators.

Ultimately, we got the initiative on the ballot, and in spite of the fact that the entire state bureaucracy opposed the proposal, it got 52 percent of the vote.

We had similar success with our "3 Strikes, You're Out" initiative, which state coordinator Dave LaCourse says would never have made it to the ballot without our program. The governor had proposed an alternative to the plan, but it was so watered down that it would only affect one or two criminals per year.

The initiative passed by the people will affect 40 to 70 criminals per year who will be behind bars for life—never again to commit crimes against persons and/or property. It received over 75 percent of the vote.

The most astonishing thing about these examples is that the legislature had the chance to pass both proposals during the previous legislative session. Senate Ways and Means chair Nita Rinehart said publicly she would not deal with the tax limitation proposal because it was a waste of time and there were more important issues to consider!

Our governor, Mike Lowry, is still contemptuous of the people's message at the polls. At an editorial board meeting of the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, he said he would need to modify "601"—the tax-limitation initiative that passed in November 1993—to get more taxes from the people. Though the people said "No!" the governor callously wants more.

photo courtesy M. Siegel

Mike Siegel: "We are literally empowering the people to do what the legislature and governor refuse to do."

If we have anything to say about it, he won't get it. We recently started the "Empty Wallet Campaign" on the program. One of our listeners—Greg on a car phone—had called to say he had sent the governor an empty wallet to indicate he had no more to give. During a period of several weeks, we promoted the campaign on the air, collected more than 1,000 empty wallets, and delivered them to the governor's office on April 15th.

An organization I started several years ago, Washington Watch, Now has a 3,000 name mailing list. Its mission this year it to unseat those legislators who refuse to do the will of the people and instead protect themselves. The slogan I developed last year as a signature of the program makes the point: I'LL REMEMBER IN NOVEMBER!

ERROL SMITH

KIEV Radio, Los Angeles, CA

As the host of a daily radio talk show in Los Angeles—a city where nearly 1,000 people were killed last year because of gun violence—I have no doubt what issue will always jam my phone lines. Crime.

How concerned are we about violent crime here in Los Angeles? I'll tell you what I hear from people all over the Los Angeles metropolitan area: We are concerned enough that some of us are afraid to drive, afraid to use automatic tellers after dark, and afraid to send our children to school or to let them walk the streets alone. Some of us are so afraid that we lock ourselves in our homes at night and become virtual prisoners there until sunrise. Others, normally law-abiding citizens, have chosen to carry concealed weapons illegally.

We are concerned enough about crime that, although we are a city of liberal tastes, we elected a Republican mayor on the notion that he's "tough enough" to turn

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photo courtesy E. Smith

Errol Smith: "I have no doubt what issue will always jam my phone lines. Crime."

Los Angeles around.

Then came the *coup de grace* from one of the most liberal city councilmen in Los Angeles—Zev Yaroslavsky, who suggested bringing in the National Guard to help provide greater security to the city. Most politically savvy people said the idea would never fly, especially among the city's black residents.

They need to spend more time listening to talk radio. Last September I asked my audience a perhaps politically naive but very germane question: Why not?

My question was greeted with a sea of lights flashing across my board, as callers one after another supported the notion of bringing in the "cavalry." More surprising was the extraordinarily enthusiastic response from countless callers residing in south-central Los Angeles, a predominantly black and Latino section of the city. Dozens of letters followed the broadcast asking me to pursue this idea further.

My station made several attempts to schedule interviews with various public officials on the subject, but most seemed unwilling to discuss it on the record. The *Los Angeles Times*, intrigued by the response from my black audience, ran a front-page article on the issue. This sparked a broader public debate—carried out through various media—which has included high-ranking police department officials, prominent criminal justice scholars, and black civil rights and community activists.

For now the debate continues. But other "on air" discussions on public safety issues continue to reveal a strong and increasingly vocal segment of the black community that is tired of living in communities that have become safe havens for violent criminals. Among my audience there is clearly no shortage of African Americans ready and willing to "pull the switch" on violent offenders. Civil rights is still a concern, but the grumbling among blacks who see public safety as the greater threat to the black community is increasing.

A recent *USA Today*/CNN/Gallup poll of black Americans revealed that 61 percent believe that black leaders are too quick to use racism as an excuse for crimes committed by blacks. The voices of that 61 percent are rarely heard in the dominant media. That's what makes talk radio such a vital outlet for the real, everyday people who fear becoming victims of crime.

ARMSTRONG WILLIAMS

WOL, Washington, DC; WOLB, Baltimore, MD

Talk radio hosts are often dismissed as ideological mentors preaching to their own small choirs.

This is not true on my show, *The Right Side*. Though I am considered conservative, most of my listeners—from the Washington, D.C. and Baltimore areas—are not. We have what the *Wall Street Journal* has called the most intellectual black listenership in the nation—as well as a 30 percent white audience.

With such diversity, the program sparks lively and heated debate. More important, I am always interested in bridging differences and finding points of agreement. There is plenty of division in America. What we need to do is talk to one another. What better place to do that than talk radio?

Guests on *The Right Side* range from liberal Congressman Floyd Flake to Haley Barbour, chairman of the Republican National Committee; from poet Maya Angelou to Senate Minority Leader Bob Dole. Guests have the opportunity to make their case to listeners and speak directly with callers about their questions and concerns. Because of this, I think radio is more truly diverse than other organs of the major media, which exert more control over the format and content of the information they present.

Talk radio has several distinct advantages in making an impact on American life. Because it is both local and interactive, people can call in and ask about specific things of interest to them in their communities. It is the perfect forum to begin campaigns on local issues by encouraging people to call their congressman or march on City Hall. And because the format of radio is participatory, people can air their own views about the problems in their communities to their neighbors, who may share the same experiences.

Take, for example, the riverboat gambling plan recently floated by Washington Mayor Sharon Pratt Kelly. The mayor was hoping to raise some revenue by bringing casino gambling into our capital city, via the Potomac. *The Right Side* was the main force behind torpedoing riverboat gambling in Washington.

There had been almost no public discussion about this idea, and then the *Washington Post* reported that the mayor had some support from local ministers. We have a city swamped by drugs and crime, a wasteful government rife with corruption, and a huge budget deficit—and they were going to try to solve this by bringing another vice into the city. If the ministers are supporting river boat gambling, where are the sinners going to go on Sunday?

I did not think the government ought to be promoting

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another way for people with large hopes and small means to throw their money away. I thought it was a moral issue, and so I brought the topic up time and again on my show. With some prompting by my program, listeners called local ministers, city councilmen, and the mayor's office. Very quickly we built a consensus against the gambling proposal. After just a few days, we took a survey of our listeners, and they came out against the idea 10 to 1. It was a local concern that had the locals concerned, and we put a stop to it.

Or take the health-care issue. Politicians will use African-Americans when its convenient for them, and they've been doing this on health care. I decided to do my own research on health care reform and how it would affect African Americans. So I brought health care specialists on my show last summer after the Clinton health plan was announced. Some of them said that this is the legislation that would put African Americans on permanent welfare.

That started a lot of calls and letters to the White House. I know, because the White House called and asked to have Lee Brown, the White House drug czar, on to talk about health-care reform. Of course, I agreed. He was scheduled to stay for 30 minutes, but my audience was so hostile that he left after 10 minutes. Most of my audience, about 70 percent, no longer believe the Clinton health plan is in their best interests.

Talk radio, in addition to its ability to activate communities, also can play a more strictly educational role. As a member of the local business community, I think entrepreneurship is one of the keys to economic self-empowerment, so *The Right Side* holds a monthly business forum. Malcolm Forbes Jr. does a monthly business seminar on the show, and we feature other area businessmen as well. While generating interest in business in the black community, we also offer help to people already trying to establish businesses locally. Callers can get advice on the show, of course, but we also spend time helping our callers off the show with advice and information.

The appeal of talk radio, of course, is that people can talk back; it's intimate. They really believe their voice is making a difference. In this age of mega-media productions and glitzy Hollywood-style production, the strength of talk radio is that it remains a medium of neighbors and friends. It is close to home. ☎

photo courtesy A. Williams

Armstrong Williams: "The strength of talk radio is that it remains a medium of neighbors and friends. It is close to home."

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Public Housing Sweep Stakes

My Battle with the ACLU

VINCENT LANE

In the late 1980s, the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) was the worst public housing authority in the country. Its crime rate was three times that of the city as a whole. It seemed as if public housing had a monopoly on nearly every example of inner-city rot: shootings, open-air drug deals, assault, poverty and fear. The first thing I did when I took over CHA was to hold town meetings with the residents, and define what the problems were. The major problem that I heard then—and still hear—was safety.

In the five-and-a-half years since I became CHA chairman, we have made real headway in a number of areas. Since 1991 serious crime of nearly all types has declined between 30 and 60 percent. Sexual assaults, homicides, and battery are all down by 44 percent. At our notoriously violent Cabrini-Green development, for example, there have been only two murders—over a love triangle—and no gang-related killings in the last 18 months. No longer do criminals set curfews; they don't control and keep people from coming and going; they don't sell drugs in the open, or shoot craps in the lobby.

Have we solved all the problems? No. Random shootings, assaults and thefts continue. Have we eliminated gangs? No, because many of the gang members are the children of our residents, and they live in the buildings. We've lowered the CHA's crime rate to only twice that of the city, but it costs $70 million a year. Not exactly a resounding success.

The most important thing we've accomplished, however, is to bring a sense to the residents that it doesn't have to be this way. We've brought a sense of possibility, of innovation to public housing—by not just reacting to problems, but finding long-term strategies that get at their root causes. That's something I've been trying to convey to Congress and to legislative groups, public housing residents, foundations, and the business community.

Capping Crime

Reforming public housing requires simultaneous attacks on several fronts—on welfare, job training, and education. But all these efforts are doomed to failure unless you tackle head-on the crime issue.

When I joined the CHA, the gangs were in control. It was not just a management problem, it was a sociological problem. Gang members were firebombing apartments, setting curfews for the tenants, and refusing to allow janitors to clean buildings.

If you're not in control of property, it's impossible to institute management improvements. I went to the police and told them, "We've got to take these buildings back. We've got to control the access; we've got to issue photo ID cards; and we've have to inspect the units and try to clean them up." We've now accomplished these tasks in over 200 buildings.

In 1991 there were 90 homicides throughout the CHA. In 1992, there were 66. In 1993, the number fell to 50. So we're making progress. Sometimes that's overlooked because homocide still is a major problem. But as I've always said, you have to take the first step if you ever hope to complete the journey.

Because of our anti-crime tactics we've tangled in court with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) nearly from day one. And unfortunately for the residents of the developments, they've prevented us from doing several things. First, in an out-of-court settlement, the ACLU forced us to end our policy of positive verification. The policy had allowed us to require visitors to the buildings to show photo IDs. ACLU lawyers objected on the grounds that in non-public housing guests aren't required to prove their identities. The problem with that argument is that someone can come in and claim to be Yogi Bear, and as long as the tenant backs him up, we have no choice but to let him in. His identity is never on record, and very often he's a drug dealer.

We also set curfews when we first secured buildings, rather than allow the gangs to set them. At midnight, all visitors had to leave; any apartments with visitors who hadn't signed out were checked on. We found that many of the "visitors" had been living there for years, fathering children, without being on the lease. Again, in an out-of-court agreement, the ACLU prevented us from maintaining the curfews.

There has been an interesting byproduct of our policy, however. Although people say, "You can't have a traditional family in public housing," many of the men who were being flushed out of the building came to me and

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J.H. White, *Chicago Sun Times*

Vincent Lane: "The first thing I did when I took over the Chicago Housing Authority was hold town meetings. The major problem that I heard then—and still hear—was safety."

complained that they didn't have any place to go; they wanted to stay with their children and their common-law wives. I suggested that they get on the leases of the apartments, which would make them legitimate tenants. Many of them decided they wanted to get married, but couldn't afford blood tests or rings. So we had a fund-raiser, and put together a mass wedding for 18 couples. All but three of the couples are still together.

The curfew, as viewed by the ACLU, was onerous. But that curfew, as a practical matter, forced a lot of men to come forward and make a choice. And it helped stabilize families.

Housecleaning: The Sweeps

Another policy we think is essential to restoring order to the developments—and which has been partially blocked by the ACLU—are so-called "building sweeps." We call them emergency inspections, in which Chicago police and CHA security can raid and search apartments without warrants. We've held sweeps whenever conditions got so bad in a building that I determined there was a health and safety hazard.

Because we did not want people saying we were doing an illegal search, when we went into the apartments we did not look under mattresses and in drawers. This was our modus operandi: We sent in a team of people to identify physical deficiencies in each unit. They looked under beds to see if the tiles were loose; they looked in the closets to make sure there were no leaks; they looked on the windowsills to make sure the windows were closing properly. Very often, during that process, they ran across drugs, contraband, weapons, and other illegal items.

We were especially concerned about the windows. In the summer of 1993, a number of children fell out of the windows. It was like an epidemic. Yes, it is the mothers' responsibility to keep their children safe; there is no city code here, or in most other cities, that requires child guards on windows. But kids were being injured and killed by these falls, so we reallocated, on an emergency basis, about $7 million to install child guards throughout the system.

One day I inquired how the installations were going at one of our developments, the Robert Taylor Homes. I was told the installers had to "pull out." One of the gang members told the superintendent on the job to "get his white ass out of there." They said they didn't want the window guards in Robert Taylor. Then they sprayed the superintendent's car with automatic weapons fire.

When I asked the staff what they'd done about it, they said they'd wait a week or two, and then see if the workers

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could sneak back in. That was totally unacceptable to me. There's no way we could go back to the period when the gangs determined when legitimate workmen could come and go from these buildings.

I organized a search for weapons, on the premise that when gunmen are firing randomly at cars and out of windows—things that go on all the time in public housing—it's really no different from a bomb threat in an airport or in an office building. When there's a threat of a bomb and you don't know where it is, you look everywhere you can; you don't run and get a search warrant before you look for the bomb.

We carried out a weapons search and found a number of weapons, ranging from .45s to MAC-lOs to high-powered rifles with scopes. The weapons we took out of the building could do a lot of damage on the street in the wrong hands.

This April, a federal judge sided with the ACLU in banning the search for weapons except in emergencies, calling them a violation of Fourth Amendment rights prohibiting unlawful search and seizure. The Clinton administration, however, through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Department of Justice seems willing to allow the searches. Despite the fact that 18 of the 19 building presidents in the CHA support the sweeps—along with the overwhelming majority of residents—I know we haven't heard the last from the ACLU.

The Welfare Lie

To understand what's really going on in public housing, you must look at the broader public policy issues. We have set up two standards in America: One for poor minorities, and one for everybody else.

The welfare system and the government assistance system have said, "Assume that poor people can do nothing to help themselves." And so the standard that we set for them was either very low or no standard at all. After three or four generations, we have people who are totally dependent on the government for everything. We should have maintained high standards, and put programs and support systems in place that would help them achieve those high standards.

Anyone who wants to talk about welfare and why poor black women have babies and no fathers around should look at the early record of public assistance. Thirty years ago, public aid wouldn't support families when there was a father in the house. What father, if he cared anything about his children and their mother, would have them penalized because he was out of work?

An underground culture, a system of lying in order to survive, developed in poor communities. Even though the rules have changed, so that now you can be on welfare and have an unemployed male in the house, a culture has built up. It's hard to break the fear that somehow the system will punish the woman and the children if the father is there and unemployed.

Developing this culture was a mistake. Children grow up in an environment where they watch men sneak in after dark, and hide if someone knocks on the door. Soon, children think that's the way it's supposed to be. On a public television program a couple of years ago, they interviewed a young man whose girlfriend was having his baby. He had three or four other babies by three or four other women. He said, "Well, you know, I'm just supposed to bring the babies here, and the state's supposed to take care of them." And it's public policy that triggered that kind of behavior.

No Reason to Work

Another problem is goverment-created rules that discourage work. Why would we want to prevent a mother on welfare from saving money if she wants to make a better life for her children? But when she saves $1,000, welfare slaps her on the wrist and says, "You shouldn't be sacrificing and saving for something positive. And we're going to cut your grant, or cut you off, or put you in jail." It's insanity.

Public housing's rent agreements reinforce this craziness. The Brooke Amendment, the first federal law controlling public housing rents, was passed some 25 years ago. Because federal resources for providing housing assistance were limited, Congress decided that only the very needy would be assisted. They set up a rent formula: now 30 percent of an individual's income would be charged for rent in public housing.

That may not sound like a bad idea, but it meant that if a family member got a job and started doing well, the family could be paying as much as $800 a month for an apartment that on the private market would be worth no more than $200 a month. It doesn't take long for people to decide that they might as well move someplace where the houses are worth that.

That's exactly what the families who could afford to have done. Unfortunately, the families that replaced them had single, young, female heads of households with children—all on welfare. And that change has ruined public housing. This is not a racial issue. In the 1940s, 75 percent or more of the families in public housing worked, and only the balance were on assistance. Now, 90 percent of our families are single mothers on welfare. It's a disaster.

No More Isolation

No one should be surprised by the conditions in public housing and inner-city communities, because our public policy did it to us. I believe that people largely are creatures of their environment, and when children only see adults waiting for their welfare checks, gangs, the drug culture, and children having children, they think it's normal. For a young girl in these communities, it's a rite of passage: Have a baby as soon as possible, get your green card, get your public housing unit, get your food stamps—and you're home free.

We have destroyed millions of people in this country with this kind of bad public policy. To undo the damage, we're going to have to break up these concentrations of welfare recipients who simply reinforce themselves with each generation. We know the problems that occur in these communities cannot be isolated and contained—as I think they once were.

The schools are terrible in the cities, and the work force is not being educated. It may take 50 or 100 years, but America is going to be substantially a brown and black

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country. We're not turning out people in our communities who can help us compete on a global basis. We've got serious problems. America is finally realizing that it's everybody's problem, not just a problem of our core cities and our most depressed neighborhoods—gangs are now moving into suburban communities and shopping malls.

AP/Wide World

The immense Robert Taylor development has been the site of numerous weapons sweeps by the CHA and the Chicago police. The ACLU sued the CHA to stop the weapons searches, even though the majority of Taylor residents supported them.

Luring the Working Class

We must bring working families back into the cities to create some economic diversity and vitality. One way to do this to provide multiple housing options for poor people. Public housing gives its residents no choice in terms of location or type of housing. Not everyone wants to live in a high-rise; we should be able to provide options like single-family homes and two-flats. Why? Because when you've got something of value, you will hold onto it. Improve the housing, increase the standards, let people know they have to adopt sociable behavior and can't trash the places they're living in or they'll be evicted. I believe people will change their behavior.

As I noted before, this concentration of poor people, 90 percent of them on welfare, does not work. We need to distribute them throughout the Chicago metropolitan area. Of course, many people are opposed to creating socio-economically mixed communities. One obstacle is our elected officials. Many of them, whether black or white, want to retain the demographic profile of their constituency—a constituency that either won't vote or will vote the way they're told to vote. Elected officials, black and white, have told me, "Vince, it's OK for you to repair these places, but I don't want you moving people around, and moving them out of my district, and bringing in people of a higher income and educational level who may not think I'm doing the kind of job I ought to be doing."

Mixing Things Up

It makes more sense to encourage every new private development to include some very low-income families. Don't tell me it won't work, because we've tried it at Lake Parc Place, at 39th and Lake Park. We had 50 percent working people and 50 percent families on welfare. We fixed up the buildings so that any working family would want to live there. The units aren't lavish, but they're safe, clean, and decent. Lake Parc Place has become a rental bargain for working families.

The results at the complex are almost exactly what we'd hoped: after two-and-a-half years, we don't have any vandalism; we don't have any graffiti; crime is practically zero; and 20 percent of the families who started out on welfare now have members working at full-time jobs. Clearly, the mixed-family approach is worth pursuing.

Until we break down the perception that poor is synonymous with bad, we've got to have an incentive for working families to live shoulder to shoulder with poor families. It's a myth that families with children can't live in high-rises successfully. When you drive along North Lake Shore Drive in Chicago, all you see are high-rises. We all know that families are raised successfully in high-rises. The problem in public housing is the concentration of poor people living there, not the buildings themselves.

True, the mixed-family strategy requires both vision and tough-minded negotiating. We took the rehabilitation money that was available and fought with HUD to put in normal amenities: ceiling fans, mini-blinds, ceramic tile in the bath, hardwood cabinets, and frost-free refrigerators. Normally, HUD officials wouldn't allow that, because of their "modest design" standards for poor people. But you can't get working people to rent from you without those amenities.

HUD's standards are often self-defeating. HUD would not approve a $250 air conditioner for poor tenants. But crime goes up dramatically in the summer because it's so hot up in those little units. No one could stand to stay up there in the heat. When people come out, they're hot, they're irritated, and that's when they get into trouble. Summer is when our crime rate goes through the ceiling. If we had air conditioning in the low-income units, where would people be? I suggest they would be in their apartments, in that air conditioning, and not outside, hot and angry, driving up the crime rate.

Holistic Solutions

We need a holistic approach to our housing problems. It's not enough to build these units and integrate them

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into neighborhoods that are socio-economically mixed. You can't just take a family out of an old apartment, put them into a new apartment, and expect them to make it on their own. Some will, but there has to be a support system in place that will deal with a range of problems. Many residents are substance abusers; many have children who drop out of school; many are not able to go to work because they haven't learned a skill.

To pull together such a support system we are developing a structured program at local schools, wherever these units are, so that parents will participate with children in education. This will include a mentoring program, creating "residential academies" in CHA buildings.

We also do referrals for substance-abuse problems and mental health counseling, with built-in incentives. We train the participants to be successful in a specific job, help them to get that job, and then set up an escrow program over five to seven years, so that they can accumulate a down payment on a home.

Then what happens? They move where they want to move, and where they can afford to move, just like anybody else. Then their housing unit is freed up for another public housing-eligible family to take advantage of that opportunity.

Public housing units are a valuable commodity. I'm against selling units to their tenants, because as a practical matter, young people and older people are always going to need help with low-cost housing. We ought to get back to what public housing was originally intended to be: A short-term helping hand. During this transition, we should put supports and incentives in place to help people get to the point that most Americans achieve in their lifetimes: To be able to move wherever they want. If housing authorities decide to sell units to the tenants, there must be an immediate hard unit replacement available to maintain the public housing stock.

To teach this sort of self sufficiency, we have training programs for entrepreneurs. Two years ago we created the Resident Self-Employment program. Almost two dozen people have gone through the program and are now trying to capitalize their own businesses.

Rather than letting a contractor repair apartments, we started a "Step-Up" program in 1992. We hired 300 residents, at $14 an hour, to repair apartments. They have repaired 1,500 apartments so far, and many of those people now are moving into apprentice programs with construction trades. Some are going into the environmental area—asbestos abatement and removal, and lead-based paint abatement and removal. We've trained people in pest removal, landscaping, and other skills that we can use to perform meaningful work at the Authority.

We're also helping people who already have skills and who were, in some instances, already running little businesses out of their apartments—hairdressers and seamstresses, for example. They are receiving training in running those businesses. Both of these approaches let people work close to home.

We have set up interagency committees that meet regularly to target resources and prevent the duplication of services. We have used this concept with various departments in the city: with the Park District; with the Police Department on the sweeps; and with the city's lighting department. We have even obtained funding for an alternative school. Government money can be a wasteful trap unless you're working together in partnership.

Bring Back the Helping Hand

When I look at the conditions in most of what passes for public housing today, it seems to me that well-intentioned people have really caused great pain and suffering over the years. Their entire approach to the poor and to public housing has helped destroy self-esteem and undermine families.

We need to get our society back to where we were 40 or 50 years ago. When people came to the cities then, they didn't have welfare systems to provide for them. What they had was a network of extended family. They could stay with relatives until they got jobs and could afford their own apartments—but the pressure was there: get a job, get on your own feet.

We have two standards in America: One for poor minorities, and one for everyone else.

Today, the poor know the government will take care of them, so there's no incentive to put forth any effort. We've got to give people a helping hand, and not a handout. We've got to understand that everybody, no matter how poor, can do something to contribute to their independence—and to the well-being of this country.

Most of the public-housing residents out here—the decent ones, and 90 percent of them are decent—support these views. I don't know whether anybody would classify families who have been on welfare for three generations as "conservative," but they certainly recognize that the approaches of the past have not worked for them. We have to find approaches for the future that will enable them to join the American mainstream. It's not enough for government bureaucrats or ACLU lawyers to reject the sort of steps we've taken in Chicago's public housing developments.

How can you build a community if people are afraid to go out and talk to their neighbors? People have to board up their windows because they're afraid of random gunfire. It's no good offering programs in the evenings if people are afraid to go out and take advantage of them. Safety is our first priority. Because rebuilding neighborhoods requires people getting together to find solutions to their common problems, and that's not possible if you have to bolt the doors and windows and not let your neighbor come in to talk.

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Be Fruitful and Multiply

An Inner-City Pastor Turns Kids on to Math

Margaret Bonilla

As tough neighborhoods go, the south side of Chicago is legendary. The area is plagued by poverty and unemployment. Crime is rampant. A two-mile stretch of public housing highrises is mostly run by drug gangs. Sirens and gunfire are so commonplace that they have become background noises. Empty liquor bottles and crack vials litter sidewalks; the streets are strangely empty, even at lunchtime.

Located in a particularly rough patch of the south side is the William D. Hinton school, a public elementary school with several hundred students ranging from pre-kindergarten to 8th grade. Hinton students, overwhelmingly from poor, minority, single-parent households, are products of the extreme stresses of inner-city life: alcoholism, drug abuse, neglect, poverty, and violence.

Yet in spite of the school's grim circumstances, something extraordinary is happening at Hinton. Every Tuesday and Friday, as soon as the last bell rings, some 25 students rush to take over an empty classroom. They pull homework out of backpacks and start comparing notes; a rowdy debate ensues over who did the assignment correctly. But the dispute ends as their instructor, a well-dressed young African American, arrives to begin the class. The kids immediately settle down, take their seats, and wait quietly for class to begin. The instructor produces today's tools—a large box of chemicals and instructions for a science experiment. The lesson that follows involves a complicated investigation: How to dispose of toxic waste, in this case a lethal level of copper-chloride solution, without polluting the water system. The group will spend the next two hours examining this question in one of the hottest after-school programs in Chicago, the Urban Pioneers.

The popularity of the program has amazed even its sponsors: In the two years Urban Pioneers has been operating, it has attracted nearly 200 participants in six inner-city schools. These 5th- through 8th-graders spend four hours per week exploring the world of science and mathematics through hands-on experiments. The kids work hard; homework is assigned at each session and good behavior is demanded. Yet new members keep joining.

The results have been remarkable. Says Sharon Bean, the principal at Hinton School, "When the Urban Pioneer organizers came to me, I nearly laughed them out of the building. 'You want *these* kids to stay after school and do math and science? You've got to be kidding.' But now kids who were discipline problems have turned around. Parents we have never seen are becoming involved in the school for the first time. And these kids have new horizons. This program has changed their lives."

Hands-on Learning

The Urban Pioneers program is a component of the Chicago Urban League's Black Churches Project (BCP), established by the League in 1988. Funded by grants from the National Science Foundation, Access 2000—a group of local universities, foundations, and businesses—and the Chicago Urban League, the goal of the BCP is to get young black students interested in science, engineering, and math. The program's original goal was to provide math and science tutoring to students in low-income areas. But in 1992 the Urban League introduced a new curriculum that emphasizes hands-on participation in science experiments that integrate many learning skills. The curriculum is designed so that each progressive lesson draws on knowledge from previous experiments: A continual reinforcement of learning.

Jerry McNeely, the coordinator of the Black Churches Program and director of Urban Pioneers, is convinced that the sooner students are turned on to math and science the less likely they will be to fall behind later. He views the elementary school program as vital to students developing a long-lasting interest in the sciences, one that hopefully will lead to graduate degrees.

McNeely studied engineering and finance at the University of Alabama at Birmingham and received a master's from Northwestern University's Divinity School. He is an ordained minister in the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) church. He was struck by the shortage of minority students majoring in the sciences while an assistant dean at the Illinois Institute for Technology (IIT), where he met few black undergraduates. He pledged to do what he could to even the numbers, and actively recruited and mentored young African Americans while at IIT. Now a staff member in the education department of the Chicago

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Urban League, he sees the Urban Pioneers program as an important first step in engaging young students in the sciences while at the same time teaching other important skills: communication, discipline, and diligence.

"Good from the 'Hood"

If you think it might be difficult to interest kids in after-school science and math, especially in the south side's tough neighborhoods, guess again. Spreading the message has been easier than anyone expected.

The Chicago Urban League began by targeting elementary schools on the south side that could most benefit from the Urban Pioneers program. Jerry McNeely met with individual school principals to see if they would commit both enthusiasm and classrooms to the program; most were eager to participate. The next step was to give a demonstration to the students, using a hands-on experiment and describing the Urban Pioneers curriculum.

The first meeting with the students is critical; the program is presented as a fun, interesting, productive alternative to just "hanging out"—and possibly getting into trouble. McNeely aims to connect science to real life in the minds of the kids. In a speech he calls "Can Any Good Come From My 'Hood?" he takes a familiar product and profiles the person who discovered or invented it: the obstacles he overcame, his educational background, his determination, and the lifestyle his work has made possible. He emphasizes the education and hard work of individuals who have made huge scientific discoveries: One example is Grace Brown, the inventor of the formula for the first dietetic soft drink, TAB, which was purchased by the Coca-Cola Company. Another favorite story is that of Bill Gates, who started his computer company in a garage and is now chairman of the multibillion-dollar Microsoft.

McNeely doesn't promise that every student will get rich quick through a scientific career, but the attraction of a better life does hook some students into the program. Many of the students McNeely meets dream of big homes, nice cars, and the security and status these things imply. They look up to wealthy black celebrities like Michael Jordan and Oprah Winfrey; yet few of these kids will become sports or television legends. So while they are encouraged to keep their dreams of super-stardom, McNeely urges them to have a back-up dream, one that they can achieve through education and hard work. Proficiency in science and math is a proven route to a better life. McNeely winds up the presentation with the same message for each youngster: "There is plenty of room at the top. All you have to do is RSVP." Students clamor for applications; the phone is usually ringing with RSVPs before he gets back to his office.

Making the Commitment

There is only one requirement to join an Urban Pioneers group; the student must fill out an application and have it signed by a parent or guardian. This requirement is important for two reasons: First, the application gives the Urban League access to the student's academic records, so his or her math and science skills can be evaluated for the program. Second, it impresses upon both the students and the parents the level of commitment required to participate. Parents are expected to join in several events during the year and to discuss the program with their children. For some parents, the *Pioneers'* program is their first steady contact with their child's school.

According to the program's application, a student must have a B average to join the program, but no student who wants to join is kept out. Students whose grades are below a B must bring their averages up to remain in the program. If remedial help is required it is provided by the Urban Pioneer instructors in extra tutorial sessions.

After Jerry McNeely and his staff review the applications, a group is formed and assigned to an Urban Pioneer staff member, who will instruct the program at that school. These instructors—called "facilitators" by the CUL—are young African Americans recruited from local colleges, where they are studying for math or science degrees. These young men and women are the most important component of the program. They will serve as instructors, tutors, big brothers and sisters, mentors, and advocates for their students.

Teachers, Mentors, Friends

The role the instructors play in galvanizing the group and presenting the students with positive role models is immense. Most of the children who join Urban Pioneers are from single-parent households, many without a father in the home. A number of Pioneers have never encountered a college student before meeting their Urban Pioneer instructor. The boys learn that being cool doesn't always mean joining a gang. The girls see smart, educated young men and women with futures beyond the south side's streets.

Because the instructors play such a large role in the success of the program, their training goes beyond the math and science curriculum the children learn after class. As role models, they are required to dress and act professionally when teaching. McNeely insists on conservative dress and neat grooming; clear, grammatically correct speech; beginning and ending the sessions on time; and always showing up or arranging for a substitute when a Pioneers' session is scheduled.

The mentors' training emphasizes discipline and control in the classroom; they are expected to be strict but fair. Even discipline problems can teach a lesson, so if such a problem arises in class the instructor not only points it out but explains how breaking the rules affects the whole class: that students walking in late are not only tardy, but disrupt everyone's concentration on the experiment; that talking in class is not only rude, but may cause you or your partner to miss important instructions; that carelessness is irresponsible, can lead to destruction of scarce materials and supplies, and might even be dangerous.

Another goal of the program is to improve the students' communication skills. The teachers require the students to speak clearly and accurately, and routinely correct their grammar and pronunciation. When a student asks a question, he or she is prompted through the steps of articulating a concise, organized thought. The students practice these skills in class discussions at the end of each experiment.

Trust is another important lesson the students learn

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from their mentors. The instructors expect their students to do the course work and follow the rules. The students trust the instructors to do what they say they will, whether it's teaching the class, treating them to a pizza, or helping out with a family problem. Maintaining this trust is what leads Jerry McNeely and his staff to attend dozens of graduations and other events each year; no request is turned down if it means a lot to the student and the Pioneers staff can possibly accommodate it.

The instructors receive a small stipend for their work in the program, but donate many more hours organizing and chaperoning events, providing remedial tutoring, and even helping students out with personal problems. Yet the mentors feel they get as much out of the program as they put into it. Julius Kimbrough, a graduate student at the University of Chicago, says the best part about his role as mentor is "helping catch kids who are falling through the cracks" of the educational system.

Eric Werner

Jerry McNeely assists Urban Pioneers and their parents at "Family Math Night." Getting parents interested in school activities has been an important result of the Urban Pioneers program.

Problem Solving

Observing a session of the Urban Pioneers group at Hinton is an eye-opener, even for one prepared to be impressed. The students file in on time, take their places, and flip open the large 3-ring binders that are issued to them at the beginning of the program. These binders contain copies of the entire year's curriculum, including instructions for experiments and homework assignments. The students take noticeably good care of these notebooks; care of equipment and course materials is stressed at every meeting.

Jerry McNeely is teaching today because the instructor for this class, Rashaan Abdul-Rahim, is taking a final at the Illinois Institute for Technology, where he is an engineering major. McNeely still teaches the sessions regularly as a substitute for his staff members, both to help out and as a way of keeping up with the curriculum, which he continually updates. After collecting the homework, McNeely introduces the day's lesson. A primary goal of the program is to develop problem-solving skills, so each experiment begins with a story.

In today's plot, the students are hazardous waste engineers; their company has charged them with diluting a toxic copper-chloride solution to make it safe to dump in a river. The group is divided into teams, and for the next two hours the young pioneers are riveted to the lesson. They follow detailed written instructions to dilute their chemicals in successive steps, taking notes, asking questions, and summarizing their findings. McNeely assists with problems, asks specific questions, and encourages those who have made mistakes. The time passes quickly; the students are reluctant to end the lesson when the time comes, but carefully clean and return the equipment and materials to McNeely.

Taking part in the lesson sharpens many different skills for the students: reading and following complex instructions, observation, recording data, asking detailed questions, working as a team, speaking informatively, and self control. This diligence brings results. All the young people who enter Urban Pioneers take a test to evaluate their math skills, and retake the test at the end of the year to chart their progress. Seventy percent of the students who retake the test improve their scores, with the average improved score going up 40 percent. These students also see their overall grades come up as a result of the work habits they develop in the program.

Fringe Benefits

Participants who keep up with homework and attendance, and involve their families in the program are eligible for special rewards. There are trips to video arcades—"seeing computer technology in action," as one young Pioneer put it—and pizza parlors. But the prizes the children enjoy most are the field trips to Chicago-area industrial plants, laboratories, and businesses, where they see real-world science in action. Recent trips have included visits to a telephone company to observe high-tech communication methods, a video company that converts commercial movies into video tapes, and a company that produces products made from corn. More advanced members have visited computer companies where they have helped assemble computers.

Another bonus is the "Corporate Partners" program.

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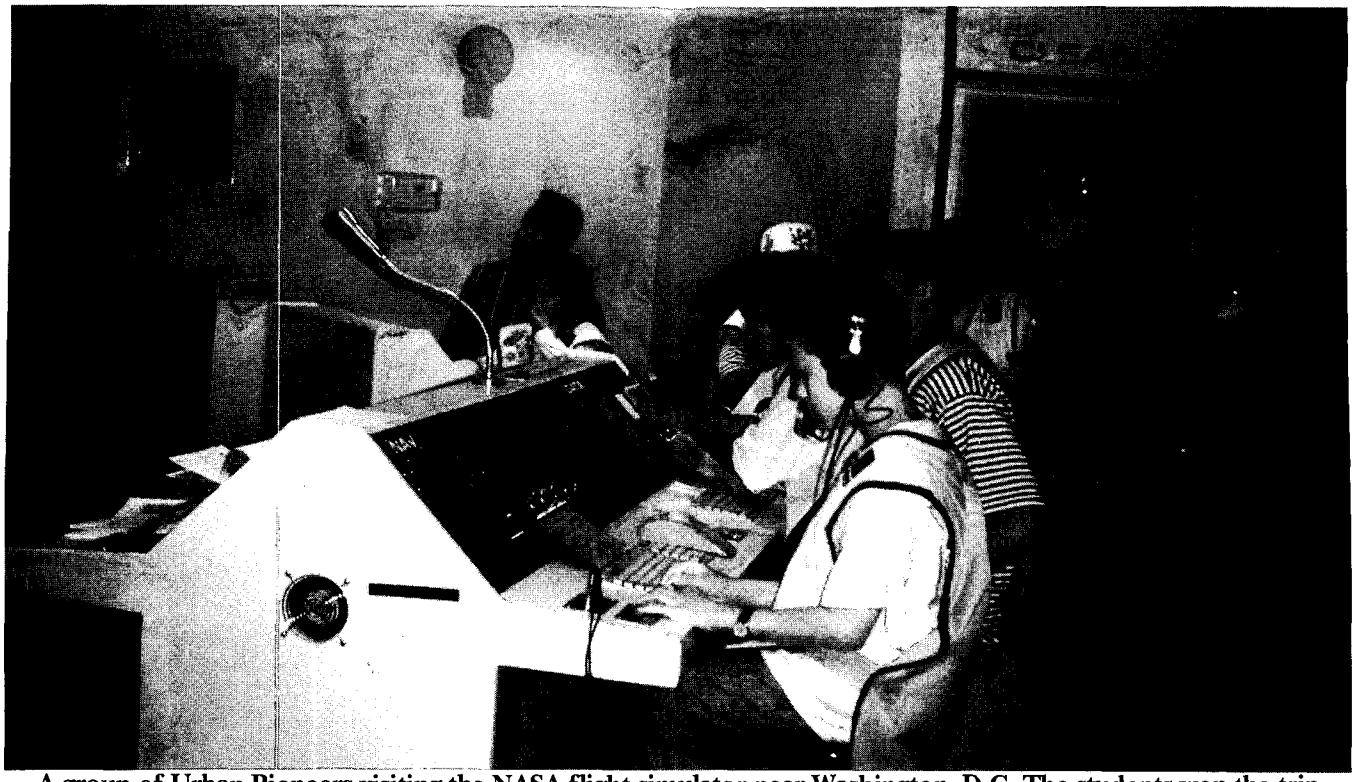

Chicago Urban League

A group of Urban Pioneers visiting the NASA flight simulator near Washington, D.C. The students won the trip through good attendance, finishing their homework, and bringing their families to participate in Pioneers' events.

The partners are members of the local professional community who speak to the Pioneers about careers in the sciences or other areas, such as finance, design, and teaching. The students also visit area colleges, where they do experiments in advanced science, chemistry, and math labs, and talk to college students majoring in these fields. Such visits encourage the Pioneers to keep up their work, and give them a vision of what the future can hold.

This year's big prize was a spring trip to Washington, D.C. to visit a National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) space simulator. For many of the 30 Pioneers who were chosen, this was their first trip on an airplane. Meeting with their congressman at the Capitol and touring the monuments gave the group a special status when they got back to Chicago; they are still eager to describe every minute of the trip. Such an experience would be out of reach for most of these children without the program.

Architects of the Future

Any Urban Pioneer you run into will tell you that he or she is college bound. An amazing statement, considering that when polled on entering the program, almost none of these children even thought about college. Principals in the schools where the program is in place report big changes in attitude and behavior. Says Hinton principal Sharon Bean, "The enthusiasm is infectious. The children are sparking new enthusiasm in the staff, sharpening and challenging the teachers." Parents are calling in to check on homework assignments and report absences, often for the first time. (The Urban League's success in getting parents interested in school activities has proved to be one of the most important by-products of the program.) And the program is having a trickle-down effect in the families; younger brothers and sisters are studying up so they can join the Pioneers when they reach 5th grade. This fall the program will expand into 15 new schools, and interest is growing.

As the students graduate to the high school program, called Tech Teens, the college preparation will become more explicit. The goal of Tech Teens is to prepare the students for the math and science Advanced Placement (AP) exams, which will give them college credits. A number of the better high school students will become assistants in the Urban Pioneers program, and go on to become instructors when they reach college.

The Black Churches Project has already had its share of successes. Three high school students who started with the original program in 1988 are now doctoral candidates in engineering, and other alumni are now volunteering to be mentors to the Urban Pioneers.

For Jerry McNeely and his staff, the successes are thrilling. The Chicago Urban League would like to see dozens of Ph.D.s come out of these programs, a whole network of new role models for urban youth. "Our program empowers students to plan their futures," says McNeely. "This program is about being architects of a new society."

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In Memoriam

A Lecture on Natural Law

Russell Kirk

The literature of natural law is complex, copious, and monthly growing vaster. All I aspire to accomplish in this second lecture on "The Future of Justice" is to offer some general introduction to the subject, together with reflections on the protections and dangers of natural-law doctrines, and observations concerning natural law and constitutional government.

A great deal of loose talk about natural law has occurred in very recent years. It was objected to Judge Bork's nomination to the Supreme Court that Bork did not believe in natural law; and when Judge Thomas was interrogated for that bench, the objection was raised that he *did* believe in natural law. These protestations came mostly from the same group of senators. Clearly a good many public men and women nowadays have only vague notions of what is signified by this term *natural law.*

Superior Authority

Objectively speaking, *natural law,* as a term of politics and jurisprudence, may be defined as a loosely knit body of rules of action prescribed by an authority superior to the state. These rules variously (according to the several differing schools of natural-law and natural-rights speculation) are derived from divine commandment; from the nature of humankind; from abstract Reason; or from long experience of mankind in community.

But natural law does not appertain to states and courts merely. For primarily it is a body of ethical perceptions or rules governing the life of the individual person, quite aside from politics and jurisprudence. When many persons ignore or flout the natural law for human beings, the consequences presently are ruinous—as with the unnatural vices that result in the disease of AIDS, or with the ideological passions, defying the norm of justice, that have ravaged most nations since the First World War.

The natural law should not be taken for graven Tables of Governance, to be followed to jot and tittle; appealed to in varying circumstances, the law of nature must be applied with high prudence. As Alessandro d'Entrevès writes, "The lesson of natural law is in fact nothing but an assertion that law is a part of ethics." And he concludes, "The lesson of natural law [is] simply to remind the jurist of his own limitations.... This point where values and norms coincide, which is the ultimate origin of law and at the same time the beginning of moral life proper, is, I believe, what men for over 2,000 years have indicated by the name of natural law."

On the one hand, natural law must be distinguished from positive or statutory law, decreed by the state; on the other, from the "laws of nature" in a scientific sense—that is, from propositions expressing the regular order of certain natural phenomena. Also natural law sometimes is confounded with assertions of "natural rights," which may or may not be founded upon classical and medieval concepts of natural law.

Eternal Laws

The most important early treatise on natural law is Cicero's *De Re Publica.* The Ciceronian understanding of natural law, which still exercises strong influence, was well expressed in the 19th century by Froude: "Our human laws are but the copies, more or less imperfect, of the eternal laws so far as we can read them, and either succeed and promote our welfare, or fail and bring confusion and disaster, according as the legislator's insight has detected the true principle, or has been distorted by ignorance or selfishness."

As interpreted by the Roman jurisconsult, and later by the medieval Schoolmen and Canonists—Thomas Aquinas especially—the legacy of the classical *jus naturale* endured with little challenge until the 17th century. In England during the 16th century it was powerfully upheld by Richard Hooker in his *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity.* In the Christian world the natural law was received as a body of unwritten rules depending upon universal conscience and common sense, ascertainable by right reason. But with the stirrings of secularism and rationalism during the 17th century, a new interpretation of "natural law" began to develop, conspicuous (near the end of the century) in the works of Hugo Grotius and Baron Samuel von Pufendorf. This latter secularized concept of natural law was held by many of the *philosophes* of the 18th century, and took on flesh during the French Revolution, when it was

Russell Kirk, *the author of* The Conservative Mind *and numerous other works, was editor of the* University Bookman *until his death in May 1994. Mr. Kirk delivered this lecture at The Heritage Foundation in 1993.*

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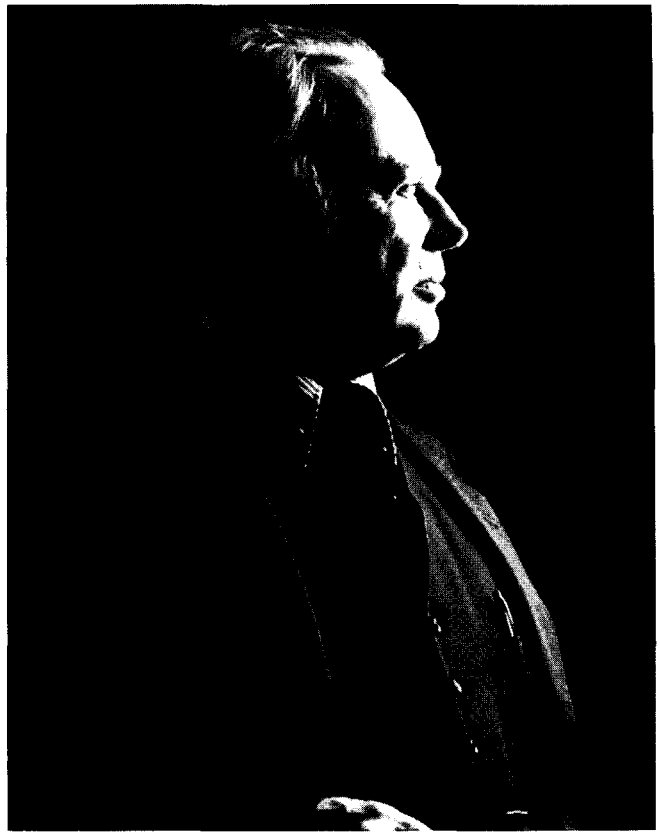
vulgarized by Thomas Paine.

Nevertheless, the older understanding of natural law was not extinguished. It was ringingly reasserted by Edmund Burke, in his distinction between the "real" and the "pretended" rights of men. Through the disciples of Burke, and through the influence of the Catholic Church, the classical and Christian natural law has experienced a revival in the latter half of the 20th century.

During the 19th century, natural-law concepts were overshadowed by the powerful Utilitarian system of Jeremy Bentham; by the theories of John Austin and the Analytical Jurists; by legal positivism; and later—particularly in the United States—by legal pragmatism. In the United States, the older and newer schools of natural law have contended against each other since the latter half of the 18th century, and both have been hotly assailed by positivistic, utilitarian, and pragmatic interpretations of law. Yet appeals to the "natural law" or "a higher law" have recurred often in American politics and jurisprudence; both conservatives and radicals, from time to time, have invoked this law of nature.



Russell Kirk: 1918-1994
"Deo volente, labor proficit"

The Catholic Church continues to adhere to the classical and Thomistic understanding of the natural law—to an apprehension of justice that is rooted in the wisdom of the species. Sir Ernest Barker put thus the idea of natural law: "This justice is conceived as being the higher or ultimate law, proceeding from the nature of the universe from the Being of God and the reason of man. It follows that law—in the sense of the law of the last resort—is somehow above lawmaking."

The most lucid and popular exposition of natural law is to be found in the Appendix, "Illustrations of the *Tao*," to C. S. Lewis's little book *The Abolition of Man.* Therein Lewis distinguishes eight major natural laws of universal recognition and application, together with several illustrations of each, drawn from a wide diversity of cultures, religions, philosophical discourses, and countries. He expounds the Law of General Beneficence; the Law of Special Beneficence; Duties to Parents, Elders, Ancestors; Duties to Children and Posterity; the Law of Justice; the Law of Good Faith and Veracity; the Law of Mercy; the Law of Magnanimity. No code of the laws of nature ever having existed, it is ineffectual to try to enforce that body of ethical principles through courts of law; no judge hands down decisions founded directly upon the admonition, "Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land"—or the Commandment's equivalents in the Babylonian List of Sins, the Egyptian Confession of the Righteous Soul, the Manual of Epictetus, Leviticus, the Analects, or Hindu books of wisdom. Nevertheless, such perpetual precepts lie behind the customs and the statutes that shelter father and mother.

So much, succinctly, by way of definition. Turn we now to the difficulty of explaining natural law to the average sensual man. Permit me to discourse with you for a little while about natural law and the moral imagination. Incidentally, I am helped here by an unpublished essay by the late Raymond English, who understood and praised the natural law, and understood and despised the claims for "natural right." Let me quote English directly:

> The natural law cannot be understood except through the elements of poetry and imagination in the soul. The poetic and the moral imagination are parts of human reason. For the man who does not feel himself in some sense a child of God, who is not possessed by the "desire and pursuit of the whole," and for whom words like *honor* are meaningless, the notion of natural law must be a Mumbojumbo, a bogle to make children behave tolerably well, a fantasy from the adolescence or the childhood of the race. Poets, James Elroy Flecker says, are those who swear that Beauty lives although lilies die; and the natural law is the poetry of political science, the assurance that Justice lives though states are imperfect and ephemeral. Justice is to politics what beauty is to art; indeed, beauty and justice become almost identical at the highest levels of human aspiration.

Permit me, ladies and gentlemen, to repeat here that the natural law is more than a guide for statesmen and jurists. It is meant primarily for the governance of persons—for you and me, that we may restrain will and appetite in our ordinary walks of life. Natural law is not a harsh code that we thrust upon other people: rather, it is an ethical knowledge, innate perhaps, but made more clearly known to us through the operation of right reason. And the more imagination with which a person is endowed, the more will he apprehend the essence of the natural law, and understand its necessity. If such a one,

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despite his power of imagination, offends against the natural law, the greater must be his suffering. So I have discovered in the course of a peregrine life. And over a good many decades I have found that most contemners of the natural law are dull dogs, afflicted by a paucity of imagination. As Adam Mickiewicz instructs us: "Your soul deserves the place to which it came, If having entered Hell, you feel no flame."

Such is the case for the importance of natural law. Permit me to turn now to the case against natural law, as expressed by the legal positivists—most strongly, perhaps, by the German scholar Hans Kelsen. They regard natural law as a body of sentimental fictions; they hold that the state is the only true source of law. The views of John Austin and the Analytical Jurists are similar: All law is decreed by the political sovereign, they hold. Rather than moving abstractly among the several schools of jurisprudence in the 20th century, I offer you now the contents of a letter I received recently from a German inventor and industrialist who had read in the Bavarian magazine *Epoche* some remarks of mine on natural law. My correspondent is a very intelligent and indeed talented man, considerable of a naturalist in that he studies flora and fauna. In politics, I suppose he may be classified as a German liberal of the old school. His communication, refreshingly innocent of the jargon of jurisprudence and ethics, suggests the mentality that lies behind the denigration of natural law by positivists and secular humanists, who recognize and deride the Christian and the classical origins of the idea of natural law.

> Whether the term 'law of nature' is more frequently used nowadays, or whether the *jus naturale* is an old invention," my German correspondent begins, "I think this term is wrong and misleading. There is no law or legislative system which can be derived from nature. Nature has rules developed during evolution, but there is only a *jus hominis* and no *jus naturale.* In other words, all ethical norms are developed and worked out by human beings, in this case mostly by the *homo stultus,* subspecies *sapiens....* The order of nature follows in many respects the right of the stronger, which, in fact, keeps nature with all its plants and animals in excellent shape. But mankind has set up ethical rules, good ones and bad ones, very different from natural rules. Many of these man-made rules are quite bad, sinning against nature....
>
> The very deplorable situation of the species *homo stultus* comes from wrong ethical rules, which are against nature. I am not pleading for the right of the stronger between human beings, but for more influence of the rare subspecies *sapiens,* especially of those individuals who understand nature—which means also the nature of human character. Unfortunately Jesus did not understand the real nature of men; nor do the socialists understand it when they expect that people will work for the state rather than for themselves....
>
> I offer another example, in which American legislators have chosen the wrong solution. There is a law in the United States, if I am correct, which forbids the killing of foreign heads of state. If I am correct this is concerned with clandestine actions, e.g., by the CIA. This law is unethical. Assuming that no American president or the American government plans to eliminate a foreign dictator just for fun, but rather because he is a danger to the United States or to his own people or both, then removing a dictator as soon as possible would save the lives of many; and is, in consequence, completely justified.
>
> We should agree that right is an exclusively human creation. What is regarded as rightful by one group of people within a community can be regarded as wrongful by another group. I seek a terminology where there is a clean and clear distinction between what comes from nature and what comes from human efforts. Human efforts are aimed very often, with the best intentions, in the wrong direction. I mean "wrong" in this sense: against nature, for nature cannot be neglected without harming the human race....
>
> Failing to realize that often human character is bad must lead to destroying a society through leniency. We have to determine when our ethical laws accord with nature and when they counteract nature. We must not ignore "the rule of the fittest," when we decide to kill a dictator, for instance. We acknowledge the right of every nation to use as much force as possible when fighting another nation to death. The fight between nations follows what could be called natural right, but is better called the rule of nature.

For this German correspondent of mine, you will have noted, "nature" signifies animal nature, Darwinian nature, red in tooth and claw. Therefore he despises appeals to natural law, and believes that not only all positive or traditional law, but all ethical principles, are human creations merely. And these human contrivances, he implies, sometimes may be mistaken; we might be wiser to found our human institutions on the principle of competition, favoring the fitter.

Here, I suggest, we perceive the mentality that lies back of the jurisprudence of Hans Kelsen and certain other positivists: Critics of the whole concept of natural law. Yet in one matter my correspondent does turn to the extreme medicine of natural law: His commendation of tyrannicide. This is interesting, as it is related to Germany in this century.

The German Experience

German jurisprudence demands that the citizen be strictly obedient to the state, for the state is the source of all law, the omniscient keeper of the peace. No law but positive law has been recognized in Germany since the fall of the German monarchy; natural law has no place.

Adolf Hitler, chosen *Reichschancellor* by lawful means, and confirmed in power by the *Reichstag* in 1933, was sustained later by national plebiscites. He was the head of the German state, the source of all law, to which all Germans had been taught obedience. Yet certain Germans—army officers, scholars, professional people, chiefly—found his actions evil. By quasi-constitutional means he had subverted the constitution. His popularity had become tremendous, and his military power. Only by death might he be removed.

Therefore a little knot of brave and conscientious men determined to save Germany and Europe by killing

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Edmund Burke reasserted the classical understanding of natural law in his distinction between the "real" and "pretended" rights of men.

Hitler. They had been reared in the doctrine that all citizens must obey the inerrant state. In this exigency, however, they turned to doctrines of natural law for justification. Was there no remedy against an unnatural master of the state? In the teachings of natural law they discerned a fatal remedy. Fatal to them, at least; for nearly all of the heroic men involved in the several conspiracies against Hitler died frightful deaths. I knew well Dr. Ludwig Freund, a kindly professor of political science, one of the two survivors of the first plot to kill Hitler. By nature Professor Freund was a law-abiding gentleman. And being law-abiding, in defense of true law he was prepared to slay the chief of state, perverter of Germany's laws and the laws of man's nature.

Law of Last Resort

I repeat that we have recourse to natural law, as opposed to positive law, only as a last resort, ordinarily. My only service as a jurist occurred in Morton Township, Mecosta County, some decades ago, when for two consecutive terms I was elected—unanimously—justice of the peace. When determining a disputed boundary between two farms, a justice of the peace does not repair to theories of natural law and meditate upon which of two claimants is the more worthy of judicial compassion; rather, the justice of the peace turns to statute, common law, possibly to local custom—and to the files of the recorder of deeds at the county seat. And so it is with the ordinary administration of law at every level. Statute, charter, and prescription ordinarily are sufficient to maintain the rule of law—the end of which, we ought not to forget, is to keep the peace.

Yet to guide the sovereign; the chief of state; the legislator; the public prosecutor; the judge when, in effect, he sits in equity—to guide you and me, indeed—there endures the natural law, which in essence is man's endeavor to maintain a moral order through the operation of a mundane system of justice.

Unlike my German correspondent, the sustainer of natural law knows that there is law for man, and law for thing; and that our moral order is not the creation of coffee-house philosophers. Human nature is not vulpine nature, leonine nature, or serpentine nature. Natural law is bound up with the concept of the dignity of man, and with the experience of humankind ever since the beginnings of social community.

It will not do to substitute private interpretations of natural law for common law or civil law, any more than it would have been well for England, during the Reformation, to have obeyed the "Geneva Men" by sweeping away common law and the whole inherited apparatus of parliamentary statutes, to substitute the laws of the ancient Jews. Positive law and customary law, in any country, grow out of a people's experience in community; natural law should have its high part in shaping and restraining positive and customary laws, but natural law could not conceivably supplant judicial institutions. Yet were natural-law concepts to be abandoned altogether—why, then, indeed, the world would find itself governed by

> The good old rule, the good old plan,
> That they shall take who have the power
> And they shall keep who can.

Higher Authority

Turn we now to relationships between the natural law and the American judiciary. Not since Associate Justice Joseph Story adorned the Supreme Court of the United States, early in the 19th century, has any member of the Supreme Court had much to say about natural law. Nevertheless, in recent decades a number of Supreme Court decisions seem to have been founded upon natural-law notions of a sort. I think, for instance, of the Warren Court's decision (the opinion written by Chief Justice Warren himself) that congressional districts within the several states must be so drawn in their boundaries as to contain so nearly as possible the same number of persons within the several districts—a matter previously left to the discretion of state legislatures. In part, this intervention was founded upon Jeremy Bentham's principle of one man, one vote; but also there seems to have lurked at the back of the minds of justices the notion that exact politi-

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cal equality, as told by numbers, somehow is "natural," whatever state and federal constitutions might prescribe and whatever the opinions of the Framers may have been. One might cite, too, the Court's decisions in the school-desegregation cases.

This question having been raised, let us examine how far we should appeal to natural law against statute and Constitution. Here we turn to an historical example and to the judgment of a leading American political and religious writer who endeavored to reconcile the claims of authority and the claims of freedom.

I refer to the "higher law" controversy of 1850 and to Orestes Brownson, the Catholic scholar and polemicist. In March 1850, on the floor of the United States Senate, William Henry Seward made his famous declaration that there exists "a higher law than the Constitution." He was referring to the Fugitive Slave Law and the Supreme Court. At once a hot controversy arose. In January 1851, Brownson published his review-essay entitled "The Higher Law," in which he refuted the claim of Seward, the Abolitionists, and the Free-Soilers to transcend the Constitution by appealing to a moral "higher law" during debate on the Fugitive Slave Bill.

Brownson agreed with Seward that:

> ...there is a higher law than the Constitution. The law of God is supreme, and overrides all human enactments, and every human enactment incompatible with it is null and void from the beginning, and cannot be obeyed with a good conscience, for "we must obey God rather than men." This is the great truth statesmen and lawyers are extremely prone to overlook, which the temporal authority not seldom practically denies, and on which the Church never fails to insist....But the concession of the fact of a higher law than the Constitution does not of itself justify the appeal to it against the Constitution, either by Mr. Seward or the opponents of the Fugitive Slave Law. Mr. Seward had no right, while holding his seat in the Senate under the Constitution, to appeal to the higher law against the Constitution, because that was to deny the very authority by which he held his seat.... After having taken his oath to support the Constitution, the Senator had, so far as he was concerned, settled the question, and it was no longer for him an open question. In calling God to witness his determination to support the Constitution, he had called God to witness his conviction of the compatibility of the Constitution with the law of God, and therefore left himself no plea for appealing from it to a higher law.

We cannot be bound, Brownson continued, to obey a law that is in contravention of the law of God.

> This is the grand principle held by the old martyrs, and therefore they chose martyrdom rather than obedience to the state commanding them to act contrary to the Divine law. But who is to decide whether a special civil enactment be or be not repugnant to the law of God? Here is a grave and perplexing question for those who have no divinely authorized interpreter of the divine law.

The Bettmann Archive

Natural law as interpreted by Thomas Aquinas and other medieval scholars endured with little challenge until the 17th century.

The Abolitionists and Free-Soilers, Brownson remarked, had adopted the Protestant principle of private judgment.

> But this places the individual above the state, and is wholly incompatible with the simplest conception of civil government. No civil government can exist, none is conceivable even, when every individual is free to disobey its orders whenever they do not happen to square with his private convictions of what is the law of God.

The Church, Brownson writes, is the authoritative interpreter of the divine law. He reminds his readers that the state is ordained of God; but the state is not the supreme and infallible organ of God's will on earth.

> Now it is clear that Mr. Seward and his friends, the Abolitionists and the Free Soilers, have nothing to which they can appeal from the action of government but their private interpretation of the law of God, that is to say, their own private judgment or opinion as individuals; for it is notorious that they are good Protestants, holding the pretended right of private judgment, and rejecting all authoritative interpretation of the Divine law. To appeal from government to private judgment is to place private judgment above public authority, the individual

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> above the state, which, as we have seen, is incompatible with the very existence of government, and therefore, since government is a divine ordinance, absolutely forbidden by the law of God—that very higher law invoked to justify resistance to civil enactments.... No man can ever be justifiable in resisting the civil law under the pretence that it is repugnant to the Divine law, when he has only his private judgment, or, what is the same thing, his private interpretation of the Sacred Scriptures, to tell him what the Divine law is on the point in question, because the principle on which he would act in doing so would be repugnant to the very existence of government, and therefore in contravention of the ordinance, therefore of the law, of God.

Brownson's argument—which we have not time enough to analyze in full today—in substance is this, in his own words: "Mr. Seward and his friends asserted a great and glorious principle, but misapplied it." It was not for them to utter commands in the name of God. Their claims, if carried far enough, would lead to anarchy. The arguments of some of their adversaries would lead to Statolatry, the worship of the state.

> The cry for liberty abolishes all loyalty, and destroys the principle and the spirit of obedience, while the usurpations of the state leave to conscience no freedom, to religion no independence. The state tramples on the spiritual prerogatives of the Church, assumes to itself the functions of schoolmaster and director of consciences, and the multitude clap their hands, and call it liberty and progress!

Brownson advocated compliance with the Fugitive Slave Law, which clearly was constitutional; indeed, obligatory under Article IV, Section 2 of the Constitution. It was his hope to avert the Civil War which burst out 10 years later. "Now there is a right and a wrong way of defending the truth, and it is always easier to defend the truth on sound than on unsound principles," he wrote. "If men were less blind and headstrong, they would see that the higher law can be asserted without any attack upon legitimate civil authority, and legitimate civil authority and the majesty of the law can be vindicated without asserting the absolute supremacy of the civil power, and falling into statolatry—as absurd a species of idolatry as the worship of sticks and stones."

Very possibly, ladies and gentlemen, you have found in these passages from "The Higher Law" and in Brownson's general argument various considerations highly relevant to our own era. As Brownson remarks, the natural law (or law of God) and the American civil law are not ordinarily at swords' points. Large elements of natural law entered into the common law of England—and therefore into the common law of the United States—over the centuries; and the Roman law, so eminent in the science of jurisprudence, expresses the natural law enunciated by the Roman jurisconsults. No civilization ever has attempted to maintain the bed of justice by direct application of natural-law doctrines by magistrates; necessarily, it is by edict, rescript, and statute that any state keeps the peace through a system of courts. It simply will not do to maintain that private interpretation of natural law should be the means by which conflicting claims are settled.

Rather, natural law ought to help form the judgments of the persons who are lawmakers—whether emperors, kings, ecclesiastics, aristocratic republicans, or representatives of a democracy. The civil law should be shaped in conformity to the natural law—which originated, in Cicero's words, "before any written law existed or any state had been established."

It does not follow that judges should be permitted to push aside the Constitution, or statutory laws, in order to substitute their private interpretations of what the law of nature declares. To give the judiciary such power would be to establish what might be called an archonocracy, a domination of judges, supplanting the constitutional republic; also it surely would produce some curious and unsettling decisions, sweeping away precedent, which would be found highly distressing by friends to classical and Christian natural law. Only the Catholic Church, Brownson reasoned, has authority to interpret the laws of nature; but the Supreme Court of the United States, and the inferior federal courts, and our state courts, take no cognizance of papal encyclicals. Left to their several private judgments of what is "natural," some judges indubitably would do mischief to the person and the republic. The Supreme Court's majority decision in the case of *Roe* v. *Wade*—in which a pretended "right of privacy," previously unknown, was discovered—in actuality amounted to a declaration of the "natural right" of a mother to destroy her offspring.

Now it seems to me curiously naive to fancy that American courts always would subscribe to Thomistic concepts of the laws of nature, and abjure Jacobin doctrines of natural right. Courts of law must ordinarily accord with the general legislative authority; otherwise the Book of Judges is followed by the Book of Kings.

Transcendent Order

In the seventh edition of *The Conservative Mind,* I have written that the first canon of conservative thought is "Belief in a transcendent order, or body of natural law. Political problems, at bottom, are religious and moral problems. A narrow rationality, which Coleridge called "the Understanding," cannot of itself satisfy human needs.... True politics is the art of apprehending and applying the Justice which ought to prevail in a community of souls."

That federal judges have not been learned in the natural law is one of the educational misfortunes of our age. When the time is out of joint, we can repair to the teachings of Cicero and Aquinas and Hooker about the law of nature, in the hope that we may diminish man's inhumanity unto man. The natural law lacking, we may become so many Cains, and every man's hand may be raised against every other man's. ☎

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Breaking the Congressional Lockgrip

The Case for a National Referendum

Representative Pete Hoekstra

There is a crisis of confidence in national government, one that threatens to permanently cripple our republican democracy.

No matter how many incumbent politicians lose to eager newcomers, the most important issues on voters' minds are either left unaddressed or unchanged. The 110 new members of the House elected in 1992 have done little to advance issues like a balanced budget amendment, term limits, or reducing the size of government. All of these issues and more find strong support in countless public opinion polls. Yet Congress refuses to reform itself.

Government paralysis carries a pricetag for any electorate. Today nearly 70 percent of the American people disapprove of the way Congress is handling its job, up from only 12 percent in 1958, according to a Gallup survey. This lack of faith cannot continue. If left unchecked, declining public confidence will destroy the credibility of national institutions so much that governing sensibly—and democratically—will become nearly impossible.

Perhaps the best way to restore confidence in the political process is to rebuild the connection between national elections and national issues. We need a new constitutional device that lets voters help set the nation's agenda. I propose that through a process of indirect initiative elections, voters should be allowed to instruct Congress about government's priorities and goals.

No Pure Democracy

The Constitution is a mixture of elements forming our representative democracy—a form of government in which people freely choose their decision-makers but do not make the decisions themselves. We are and should remain a republic, not a pure democracy. The Founders rightly feared the momentary passions of even the limited, property-owning, male and fairly well-educated electorate of the time. For them, democracy meant rule by the *demos*, or mob—a volatile situation to be avoided for its tendency to trample minority rights.

James Madison believed a republican form of government would "refine and enlarge the public views, by passing them through the medium of a chosen body of citizens, whose wisdom may best discern the true interest of their country, and whose patriotism and love of justice will be least likely to sacrifice it to temporary and partial considerations." In large measure, the main constitutional elements of separation of powers, federalism and bicameralism are all designed to allow time for the passions of the masses to cool, hopefully turning dangerous impulses into more reasoned effective change.

Madison is usually considered one of the more levelheaded of the Founders, and his critique of direct democracy is sound and broadly admired. His optimism, however, about the "wisdom," "patriotism," and "love of justice" of elected representatives now seems naive and anachronistic.

The brakes against mob rule written by into the Constitution should not be lightly dismissed. There are, on the other hand, Constitutional elements to promote the democratic impulse. These include a wide suffrage, short election terms for House members, and the requirement that tax bills originate in the House. Constitutional amendments added since have expanded the vote, made the Senate directly elected, guaranteed participation rights to excluded groups, and preserved and promoted individual freedoms. Extra-constitutional developments, such as the rise of mass political parties, and the increasing number of offices filled by elections, have strengthened the voice of the people.

Sadly, these changes to broaden participation have not improved our government. The changes clearly have made elected officials more responsive to the immediate opinions of individual voters, yet major issues remain unresolved. Individual citizens have more opportunities to participate in political debate, but see little substance in what is being debated. Institutional developments and campaign changes have made members of Congress almost invulnerable to mass public judgment, while at the same time allowed them to manipulate the opinions of isolated constituencies and individuals.

Representatives cultivate individuals through casework, and narrow constituencies by direct mail and political action committee solicitations. The power to appease constituents on an almost individual basis allows representatives to ignore larger issues and place the blame for inaction on the institution. Today we have a far more

Pete Hoekstra *represents the 2nd district of Michigan.*

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responsive government than ever—responsive to narrow interests, that is—but its officials can more easily evade responsibility for inaction and gridlock.

Voters Setting Priorities

To return to the Founders' vision for our constitutional government—to restore our democratic republic—we need a new constitutional mechanism that allows voters to help set national priorities. I have introduced three bills in the House of Representatives that provide two basic routes for indirect initiatives. Either process would let voters set issue agendas in national elections—the best way of reconnecting elections and candidates to issues. Indirect initiatives restore substantive debate on real policy while preserving key constitutional checks on mass democracy.

THE BRAKES AGAINST MOB RULE WRITTEN INTO THE CONSTITUTION SHOULD NOT BE LIGHTLY DISMISSED. THERE ARE, ON THE OTHER HAND, CONSTITUTIONAL ELEMENTS TO PROMOTE THE DEMOCRATIC IMPULSE.

One approach calls for a nationwide advisory referendum on term limits for members of the House and Senate. Voters would decide whether Congress should pass a constitutional amendment limiting service in the House and Senate. While current opinion polls suggest such a referendum would be overwhelmingly in favor of term limits, a nationwide debate and vote would clearly have more impact than a mere public opinion poll.

An advisory referendum is admittedly a "test run" for initiatives; the results would be nonbinding and Congress could choose to ignore—as it too frequently does now—the voters' choice. But the political dynamics of a national referendum, even one that is nonbinding, are such that Congress will be hard pressed to avoid issues subject to such wide public discussion.

As a further inducement to restore democracy, I have introduced other legislation that would make the indirect initiative process more powerful. One proposal is an *indirect* initiative process for legislation, and provides for the placement of citizen-sponsored initiatives on a national ballot. An initiated measure must first pass stiff petition rules for being placed on the ballot, and then, if it receives a majority vote in three-fifths the states, goes before the Congress. Congress has 15 months to enact the proposal, pass legislation with changes in it, or ignore the bill. If Congress approves the bill and the president signs it into law, the process ends. If Congress takes no action, the same initiative is placed on the next general election ballot and, if it passes, becomes law. If Congress passes a different but related bill, both versions go back to the people for a second vote. The measure that receives the most votes becomes law. If neither receives a three-fifths vote, the initiative fails.

Another bill would provide a similar mechanism to propose constitutional amendments. A citizen-initiated constitutional amendment proposal must meet the same rigorous petition and vote requirements as the first bill. It must also, however, gain a super-majority (60 percent) of the votes in a majority of states. If it meets these hurdles, the amendment goes to the states for ratification. At that stage, the ratification procedures provided for in Article V of the Constitution take over.

Limiting Government

The national citizen initiative process, both to enact and repeal laws and to propose constitutional amendments, could be used in many ways to limit the size and scope of the federal government, including: a balanced budget, term limits, and line-item veto amendments to the Constitution; tax limitations and/or tax cuts; major campaign finance and lobbying reforms; and limitations on government takings of private property.

These National Citizens Initiative (NCI) proposals will help citizens set the agenda in Washington without changing the essential nature in which decisions are made. An advisory referendum is a modest means to induce congressional action. If such a process bears fruit, the constitutional amendments I have proposed would prove unnecessary. More likely, however, the more forceful mechanisms in the proposals are necessary to redirect Congress's attention back to the interests of the people.

While there has been little research conducted to indicate whether a national initiative process would increase voter participation, the 1992 presidential election might be instructive. The entry of Ross Perot into the process through a third-party candidacy, complete with a massive petition drive to gain access to the ballot, brought many previously uninterested participants back into the process. While voter turnout was still inexcusably low, it was up by 13 million votes over the 1988 election, and reversed the steady decline in rates of voter participation in recent years. There is evidence that when people believe their vote can make a difference, they make the effort to vote.

Legitimacy Under Attack

Initiative and referendum opponents have argued strenuously against various forms of national initiatives. Although most of the attacks have been leveled against direct initiatives, not against the indirect processes I propose, these arguments deserve to be considered.

The first criticism is that direct lawmaking by the people may undermine the legitimacy of elected government by taking power away from elected representatives. But this legitimacy is already under attack from a large segment of the electorate. Moreover, indirect initiatives still involve the legislature; a legislature finally working on issues of major public concern would enhance, not harm, its legitimacy.

Furthermore, if a national initiative challenges the status quo, and the decisions made by Congress more clearly reflect the will of the American people, then the citizen initiative has accomplished a great deal. Holding

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Bob Paetshow/ Manistee News Advocate

Representative Pete Hoekstra meeting with his constituents. "Today we have far more responsive government than ever—responsive to narrow interests, that is."

the institution of the Congress (as opposed to individual members) accountable for debating issues that affect all of society, and assessing the status of national policies on a regular basis, is a healthy exercise. The initiative will enhance, not destroy, our great deliberative tradition as a nation.

Another argument against initiatives is that they encourage legislative inertia, that the legislature will wait for the public to act on controversial matters to avoid blame. Again, this avoidance is occurring now; indirect initiatives will force action but not predetermine the outcome. Opponents of initiatives argue that such lawmaking avoids the important steps of deliberation, compromise, and refinement. Not true. Any ballot measure that is hasty, too strident, oversimplified or poorly drafted can be halted and corrected by Congress, subject to the approval of voters who Congress would have had two years to convince.

Some critics of initiatives say they are potential tools of special interest groups that cannot get their way in the regular legislative process. If there is anything true about contemporary American politics, it is that special interests routinely place items on our legislative agenda—and keep reform efforts off. Witness the difficulty of killing honey, wool and mohair, and tobacco programs, or the failure to enact real campaign reform.

The petition requirements are large enough to ensure that special-interest or frivolous measures would rarely, if ever make it even to the initial vote. A harmful special interest will have a far more difficult time in organizing support for two nationwide votes two years apart than in obtaining closed-door favors from a few congressional leaders.

Some critics contend that a national initiative destroys federalism and its important protections for states and regions. To the extent federalism is not already destroyed by federal mandates and the shrinking power of the Tenth Amendment, the supermajority requirements and legislative review of my proposals limit the possibility of specific regions or states gaining unfair advantages in the process.

Finally, critics of the initiative process say that proponents have undue faith in the masses and lack of respect for elected elites. Admittedly, indirect initiatives display more faith in the average voters and put more power into their hands. I believe it restores an appropriate balance between the electors and the elected. It is clear to me, Madison's confidence in us notwithstanding, that our current system places too much faith in elected elites to address issues that are of broad concern.

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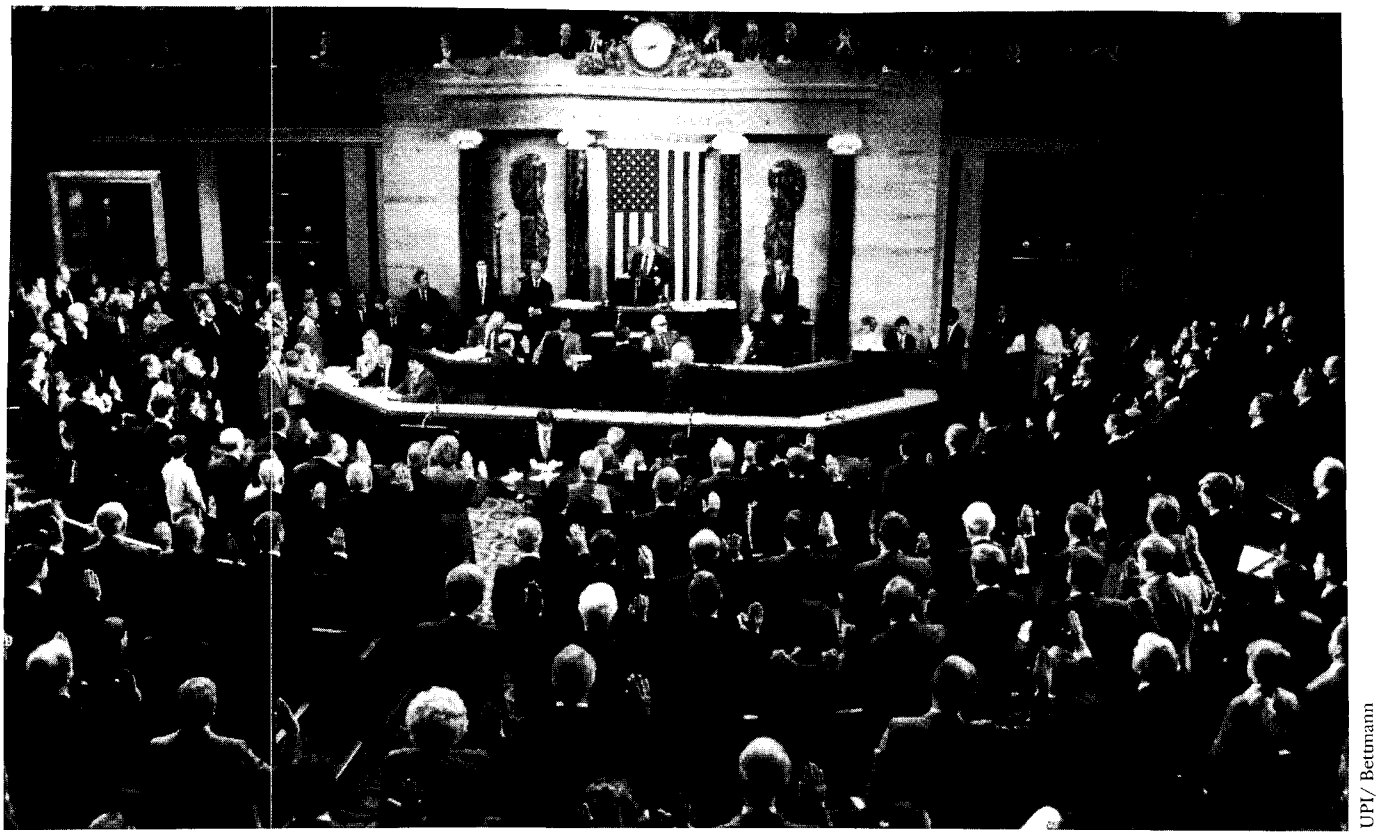

UPI/ Bettmann

The 110 new members of the House elected in 1992 have done little to advance issues like a balanced budget amendment, term limits, or reducing the size of government.

Stimulating the Voters

Indirect initiatives preserve many of the advantages of the current system—preserving our representative form of government, protecting minorities, preventing hasty decisions, fostering compromise and conciliation. At the same time, they can stimulate the dangerously flagging public participation in civic affairs. Elections would once again be about both issues and candidates. Voters could go to the polls confident that they are sending a signal to Congress. Candidates would be more likely to take positions on ballot issues, and less able to go into office based merely on name recognition and slick campaign styles.

The underlying contemporary malaise, alienation and cynicism toward politics are all too apparent today. Unchanneled into productive expressions of citizen control, such moods could erupt in ways that would damage our constitutional principles and long-standing political traditions such as political parties.

Indirect initiatives and referenda also would provide national leadership for the legislature. Such leadership has been plainly absent from the current congressional power structure. A national initiative of either the advisory referendum type or the more powerful legislative proposals would help create a national, publicly developed agenda—one with which Congress would have to grapple within two years. Congress could actually be transformed from an assemblage of parochial agents to a body forced to debate and define the public good.

The initiative process realizes the constitutional provision for the public to "petition Congress for redress of grievances." Special interest lobbyists defend their access to Congress on these same "petition" grounds. Sure, individuals can write, call or meet with their representatives. But the wealthy have the means to organize in a collective voice, and their "petitions" are more likely to be heard. The National Citizens Initiative gives the average voter greater clout to compete with the current powerful interests.

Ending Business As Usual

A national indirect initiative process is not a conservative or liberal issue. Experience from the states and other nations that have initiatives shows both liberal and conservative victories. Indirect initiatives are a democratic response to restoring republican principles. By linking national elections with agenda setting, they are a return to our roots, not a departure from them. National Citizen Initiatives provide two useful functions that elevate public debate and reinvigorate our traditional institutions: They separate issues from personalities, and they rebuild the bridge between the electorate and the elected representative.

As with any major reform, national indirect initiatives and referenda will disrupt comfortable relationships and break up cozy alliances. It may well mean the end of business as usual in Washington, D.C. But business as usual is not what this nation needs or what the voters want. A indirect initiative process will help restore the democratic nature of our republican institutions—before growing public frustration brings even greater alienation or a stampede to more radical measures of change. ☎

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LETTERS

David A. Bositis, Ernie A. Stephens, Peter Signorelli, Eugene H. Methvin, John P. Walters, Charles R. Bacon, Jr., Rich Roberts, Fred E. Inbau, James Wootton, Gerald S. Arenberg, Bill Kelly, Karl M. Altenburger

MEYERSON CONFUSED

Dear Sir:

In "Manna 2 Society," Adam Meyerson predicts an earthquake in American politics; a substantial minority, if not a majority, of blacks, he says, will soon be moving to political conservatism. *Earthquake?* I'd read that seismographs were capable of detecting infinitesimal movements of the earth's crust from thousands of miles away, and such instrumentation would certainly be necessary to detect any shift in American politics connected to political conservatism amongst African Americans.

I believe—along with many black citizens, political activists, and scholars, that the interests of the African-American community would be advanced if black voters were not so strongly wedded to the Democratic party. However, Meyerson's election analysis is both highly selective and misleading. As a rule, when the Republican share of the black vote is up, black turnout is down. The most recent examples of this include Christie Whitman in New Jersey and George Allen in Virginia. Black turnout in New Jersey was down 33 percent from 1989 (an eight as opposed to a 12 share of the total electorate) and in Virginia it was down a fifth (from a 17 to a 14 percent share of the total electorate). Black Democratic voters stayed home, and in consequence, black GOP voters, who invariably turn out, became a much larger part of the actual black electorate. Most of this downturn is attributable to Jim Florio and Mary Sue Terry, and not to Christie Whitman and George Allen.

Neither Meyerson nor anyone else knows what Tommy Thompson's share of the black vote was in 1990; black voters comprise only 4.1 percent of the eligible electorate in Wisconsin, a portion inadequate to allow for any reliable statistical assessment of the division among black voters. Wisconsin is an asterisk state. Why refer to Dick Thornburgh's black support in an election held 16 years ago in an essay on the future of American politics when in an election held less than three years ago, Thornburgh received no black support to speak of against Harris Wofford? Thad Cochran has minimal black support in Mississippi (in 1984 he received 13 percent of the black vote), and the reason that the Democrats did not offer an opponent resided in the white, not the black, community.

I would also observe, to close the syllogism, that when Alan Keyes, the epitome of black Maryland conservatism, ran for the U.S. Senate in 1988 against Paul Sarbanes (the epitome of dull white-bread Dukakis liberalism), Sarbanes overwhelmed him among black Marylanders, 84 to 15 percent. In 1992, when Keyes tried again against Barbara Mikulski, she received an even larger share of the black vote—88 to 12 percent.

There are a few other electoral matters worth noting. J.C. Watts holds a statewide office in a white state (6.4 percent black voting-age population) and further the office he holds—State Corporation Commissioner (the State Corporation Commission regulates the oil and gas industry)—is not viewed as holding much relevance to the African-American community in Oklahoma, or elsewhere. Ken Blackwell does not owe his position as treasurer of Ohio to black voters but to Governor Voinovich. Both Watts and Blackwell hold their offices due to white, not black, supporters.

Meyerson confuses *black conservatism* and electoral support for what most observers refer to as *moderate Republicans.* Republican conservatives call people like Arlen Specter (enemy of Robert Bork) and John Danforth (Midwife of the 1991 Civil Rights Act) Republican *liberals.* The reason they have black supporters is because their type of Republican politics and genuine sensitivity to the black community represents the only potential for increasing black support for Republican party. Last year, I presented a paper at the American Political Science Association meetings—and one of the principal findings was that moderate Republicans comprise slightly less than a third of Republican activists—and black Republican activists are located almost entirely within that camp.

Meyerson's observation that black men are more conservative (or rather that they were more likely to vote for Bush and Perot) than black women is consistent with gender cleavages among whites; more im-

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portant politically, however, is that for every two black men voting, there are three black women casting their ballots. Bill Clinton's New Democratic politics (i.e., crime, welfare, Jesse Jackson, and Sister Souljah) is not, as Meyerson suggests, aimed at African Americans; on the contrary, it is aimed at Reagan Democrats. Clinton received a smaller share of the black vote than either Dukakis or Mondale. Meyerson's casual and cavalier equation of religion and political conservatism is so disingenuous that it hardly merits comment.

The big picture. Meyerson's essay confuses the issues of black conservatism—a matter of little or no importance to black politics—and black support for, and incorporation into the leadership ranks of, the Republican party, or rather Republican parties—national, state, and local. The most important and influential black Republicans of the modern era have all been centrists—Bill Coleman (vetting Lani Guinier), Art Fletcher, Sam Jackson, Colin Powell (assuming he's a Republican), Ed Brooke, and most recently, since Meyerson mentions him, Ken Blackwell (I could add many other names to the list).

Moving a politically meaningful share of the black middle class into the GOP is not going to be a feat easily achieved. This is due in large part to past Republican transgressions, i.e., the politics of Harry Dent, Lee Atwater, and Charlie Black—the Southern Strategy—with Willie Horton, welfare Cadillacs, and thinly veiled references to race and crime designed to appeal to Reagan Democrats and other whites' fear of black criminals lurking around every corner of their imaginations. This is not a Democratic perception of GOP politics; most black Republicans view GOP politics through the same lens. Politically aware African Americans are alert to the slightest hint of any Republican use of racially based politics is to belabor the obvious.

Further, the present GOP leadership in the RNC, and in Congress, is increasingly Southern in make-up, and from the "other" wing of the party, the 70 percent or so that black Republicans do not like; and I can assure you that they do not hesitate to express this sentiment in private among friends, and if people like Haley Barbour and Newt Gingrich don't get off their butts they will soon be doing so in public. The Southern-conservative wing of the GOP is mostly insensitive to the feelings of the black community, and generally offers nothing to attract black support. Haley Barbour thinks he's clever; his head must be in the clouds or some other place. He is unqualified to lead the Republican party in the directions you seem to advocate; he doesn't support such a movement, and he wouldn't know how to achieve such a change even if he did.

The GOP offers its principal supporters—whether entrepreneurs, businessmen, farmers, or southern Christian fundamentalists—something tangible in return for their support. They offer potential black supporters nothing. Middle class black Americans find Republican "messaging" on values and crime and related matters mostly hot air. Unfortunately for the GOP, the New Democrats—the Bill Clintons, the Al Gores, and the Dianne Feinsteins—can run circles around top Republicans these days on the "message front" (as R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr. has observed the right has "petered out").

MEYERSON CONFUSES THE ISSUES OF BLACK CONSERVATISM— A MATTER OF LITTLE OR NO IMPORTANCE TO BLACK POLITICS— AND BLACK SUPPORT FOR, AND INCORPORATION INTO THE LEADERSHIP RANKS OF, THE REPUBLICAN PARTY.

—DAVID BOSITIS

As Meyerson mentions, one-third of the national sample of eligible black voters in the HBO/Joint Center survey identified themselves as *conservatives*. Here's what he doesn't mention about these "conservatives": 79 percent favor affirmative action, 76 percent want to cut defense dramatically and use the money for urban programs, 81 percent think too little money is being spent on education, 83 percent favor Afrocentric education, 80 percent favor new government initiatives to help young black men, two-thirds are Democrats, and 75 percent rate Jesse Jackson favorably. Voilà, a flock just waiting to be led to the GOP pastures by Haley Barbour and Bob Woodson.

Meyerson mentions black support for school choice, selling public housing, cutting welfare, and dealing with drugs. Other conservatives have cited my findings on support for the death penalty and negative ratings of Congress. A number of my liberal friends were none too pleased that I included numerous questions in the HBO/Joint Center Survey that they thought would be used by persons on the right for propagandistic purposes. I was not taken with their arguments; as a scholarly, and agnostic, observer, I would rather deal from a position of

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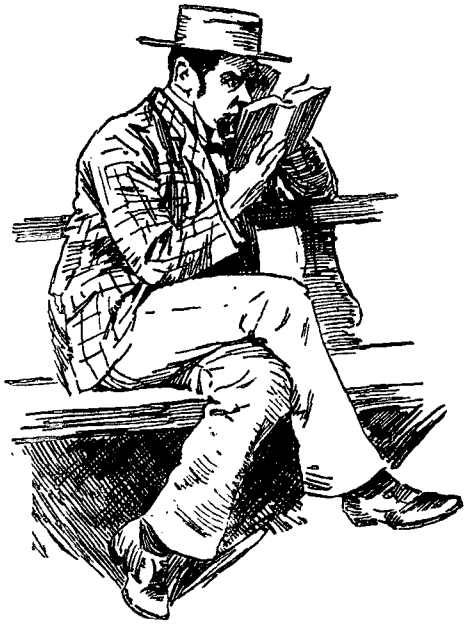
complete information, regardless of how complex and inconsistent that information. I remain unsympathetic to their arguments, but I can certainly empathize with their concerns, since most conservatives have in fact culled the findings in hope of securing ammunition for their political purposes.

To add a little context to Meyerson's citations, consider the following: 91 percent of those African Americans surveyed support national health insurance, 70 percent support gun control, 80 percent support abortion rights, 86 percent favor equalization of funding across white and black school districts, 78 percent favor free condom distribution in schools, and 53 percent favor free needle exchange programs. Conservative earthquake?

To continue, remember, the black community's investment in the Democratic party is enormous. All but one Congressional Black Caucus member in the 103rd Congress is a Democrat. Charlie Rangel, Ron Dellums, Lou Stokes, John Conyers, John Lewis, and Bill Clay among other CBC members are some of the most powerful of Washingtonians; next year could be even better from a black Democrat's perspective assuming the Democrats remain in the majority (one risk of one-party politics). All but a handful of the 520 or so black state legislators across the country are Democrats. California's Assembly Speaker Willie Brown remains one of the giants of American politics. On the other hand, Gary Franks, the only black Republican Congressman, could disappear from the Washington political scene with barely a murmur.



In sum, the prospects for any movement of African Americans toward the Republican party are hardly promising. However, that being said, the time is now for the GOP to reconsider its relationship to black America. Since race-conscious appeals are not going to work with Reagan Democrats while New Democrats are around using the same pitch, why not focus on bringing some of that large and growing—and increasingly suburban—black middle class into the Republican ranks. In future close elections, the black vote, often unearned by the Democrats, generally uncourted by the Republicans, is going to be decisive, and, *ceteris paribus*, decisive for the Democrats.

A prescription for change would look something like the following. First, for the dunderhead Republicans who need it (a majority), take some sensitivity training (among other things I would recommend listening to Ed Rollins, as he genuinely knows a thing or two about the matter). Second, the GOP has to take a serious look at what it has to offer urban political interests and the black middle class, the place where the potential voters are. They don't want advice or messages from the GOP; a *Book of Virtues* may interest some black middle class families as reading material, it offers nothing of political significance. Finally, start listening to the black community. Stop searching the black community for individuals like Bob Woodson and Alan Keyes, who mirror back to you the messages you wish to hear.

I certainly agree with Meyerson that the 1990s are (and will continue to be) a time of great political change. But conservatism is not the way to bring more African-Americans into Republican party affairs.

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Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies
Washington, DC

IN FUTURE CLOSE ELECTIONS, THE BLACK VOTE, OFTEN UNEARNED BY THE DEMOCRATS, GENERALLY UNCOURTED BY THE REPUBLICANS, IS GOING TO BE DECISIVE, AND, CETERIS PARIBUS, DECISIVE FOR THE DEMOCRATS.

—DAVID BOSITIS

OVERDUE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Dear Sir:

Adam Meyerson's article "Manna 2 Society — The Growing Conservatism of Black America" is a long overdue acknowledgment of myself and thousands of others like me. You guessed it: I am black and I am a CONSERVATIVE. There are many more "black conservatives" out there than you think; let not our silence mislead you. In 1993 my wife and I were asked by the *Buffalo News* to comment on President Clinton's first State of the Union address. A reporter joined us shortly after dinner and watched the speech after which our comments were solicited.

My wife and I were very critical of Clinton. In fact, we both reiterated the Republican standard of "family values" and crime prevention.

For the next several weeks we received over 80 harassing telephone calls from individuals claiming to represent our fellow "black people." They all objected to our lack of support for Clinton whom they all see as their savior. The ironic thing about these individuals was that they all represented a single arm of the local Democratic machine. These closed-minded liberals speak only for themselves and their own agenda—perpetuation of the despair in the black communities.

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I and many others like me agree with your view that "economic advances for blacks [must come] from black entrepreneurship." This means certain death for many of the liberal sponsored social programs which litter the landscape of black communities. It also means jobs and economic self-sufficiency for those who dare to go against the grain. Liberals, as you know, will not stand idly by and permit something like economic independence; come to these communities; their policies have succeeded just fine in keeping the black community in check, hence securing their jobs.

I am a conservative today, I have always been a conservative and I will die a conservative. I am not, however, a "black" conservative, just simply a conservative.

Ernie A. Stephens
New York, NY

GOP not a Contender

Dear Sir:

"Manna 2 Society," Editor Adam Meyerson's assessment of "the growing conservatism of black America," is distorted by his reliance on a conservative vs. liberal analytical framework. The movement within the African-American community is hardly from a liberal plantation to a conservative one. Meyerson poses the shifts within black America as readjustments to the prevailing divisions within the white population. This is appropriate to a degree, in that African Americans are indeed just as animated and concerned over the same policy choices as are white Americans. However, the conservative vs. liberal focus ignores any significantly black perspective on the question.

As Meyerson acknowledges, no change in party affiliation is necessary for the shift in the black community toward "conservatism." In fact, President Clinton rhetorically espouses what might pass as a conservative litany on several social issues—a return to the bourgeois ethic of citizen obligation and government authority: hire more cops, provide stiffer sentences, build more prisons, stop black welfare moms from having more kids and put them to work, express revulsion to "gangsta rap," etc. Some black Americans can very easily shift to "conservatism" by supporting the rhetorical Clinton—and his party—but whether such a shift would fundamentally alter their situation is questionable. Perhaps, thus "the epicenter of American politics will move sharply rightward," as Meyerson asserts, resulting in more right-wing candidates running for and taking office. But would that really be an advance for the African-American community? Were blacks to endorse other elements of the conservative litany—a balanced budget amendment, term limits, and a line-item veto—their net situation (as opponents of these measures within the African-American community have argued) would probably be worse, in that these policies would negate the political power they have managed to accumulate.

The GOP simply does not compete for the black vote. There are individual Republicans who run counter to this tendency, former U.S. Congressman Jack Kemp is notable in that regard, and Republican leaders who have outstanding civil rights records, U.S. Senator Bob Dole, for example, but as a whole the GOP does not acknowledge any special circumstance for African Americans.

Suppose a majority of blacks did embrace the principles of conservatism Meyerson outlines. Would that alter the fact that despite comprising 13 percent of the population they still only possess 3 percent of the nation's capital? Would that fundamentally alter the historic disadvantages the community faces in access to capital? There is a myth among conservatives that the reason enterprise has such a hard time in the black urban centers is that too many blacks are not willing to work. Among some, the deficiency is seen as congenital. The more sophisticated, however, preach that it is the absence of any cultivation of the work ethic that results in the condition. The work ethic is tied into the virtue of personal responsibility and responsibility to the family, all of which receive heavy emphasis in the conservative agenda. And when blacks endorse those notions, they are judged as "responsible," even "conservative."

REPUBLICANS HAVEN'T ACTIVELY CAMPAIGNED FOR BLACK VOTES ON ANY SERIOUS SCALE NATIONALLY SINCE THEY ENDORSED THE RACIST "SOUTHERN STRATEGY" OF WRITING OFF THE BLACK VOTE TO THE DEMOCRATS IN ORDER TO GO AFTER THE LARGER WHITE VOTE.
—PETER SIGNORELLI

The success of Republicans like Mayor Bret Schundler of Jersey City is related more to the fact that they actively campaigned for black votes. Republicans haven't really done this on any serious scale nationally since they endorsed the racist "Southern Strategy" of writing off the black vote to the Democrats in order to go after the larger white vote.

The "conservative" agenda Meyerson presents, however, offers blacks an unappealing invitation to switch from a liberal plantation to a conservative one. His mention of economic policy merely cites a need for the growth of black-owned businesses, advising that "the conservative dream is for African Americans to be full participants in the private enterprise economy." Without addressing the need to end the particularly onerous obstacles to wealth creation faced by the African American community, however, that dream merely expresses pious platitudes.

Peter Signorelli
Managing Editor
Polyconomics, Inc.
Morristown, NJ

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ADAM MEYERSON RESPONDS:

The political complexion of black America has abruptly changed color twice in this century. In 1934, a majority of African Americans voted Democratic for the first time, as northern blacks abandoned the party of Abraham Lincoln and joined the New Deal Coalition of Franklin Roosevelt. A second realignment came in the mid-1960s as the national Democratic party took the lead in pushing through civil rights and voting rights legislation that the GOP resisted. Richard Nixon won 35 percent of the black vote against John F. Kennedy in 1960, with his strongest black support coming from the Jim Crow South. But by 1964, southern blacks joined big-city Northerners in the Democratic camp, as 94 percent of blacks voted for Lyndon Johnson over Barry Goldwater.

In my article, "Manna 2 Society: The Growing Conservatism of Black America," I predicted that black politics would soon shift sharply again—this time to the right. I contended that Republicans would not necessarily benefit from this shift, because many of the most articulate new black conservatives would be Democrats. But I predicted that within a few years a substantial minority, if not a majority, of African Americans would join the ranks of conservatism.

I deeply appreciate David Bositis's thoughtful letter. He makes many important points, the most valuable being his careful analysis of black public opinion data. Bositis is correct in arguing that black support for tougher crime control, school vouchers, and tenant management of public housing does not translate into a blanket endorsement of the entire agenda of the conservative movement. Further, as he shows, the third of African Americans who identify themselves as conservative hold many positions at odds with the Reagan wing of the Republican party. I agree as well with Bositis that conservatives and Republicans should spend more time listening to the black community.

Bositis does not challenge any of my three major examples of growing black conservatism—the overwhelming African-American support for Clarence Thomas despite ferocious opposition by the civil rights establishment, virtually all elected black Democrats, and the liberal black Republicans whom Bositis points to as the salvation of the GOP; Mayor Bret Schundler's 40 percent share of the black vote in Jersey City on a platform of lower taxes, school vouchers, and more police on the streets, despite an aggressive get-out-the-vote drive for his opponent run by the local black churches and political establishment; and growing black support for tough-on-crime politicians such as former Jesse Helms aide Tom Fetzer, who won 20 percent of Raleigh's southeast side by aggressively campaigning for more police protection in the neighborhood. The latest example of the black backlash against crime took place in May, after my article appeared, as a biracial coalition tossed out Richmond, Virginia's city council and mayor, replacing them with a new leadership making crime reduction its top priority.

Nor does Bositis challenge my argument that the principal attraction of liberalism for upwardly mobile and middle-class blacks—the availability of government and labor union jobs—has lost its luster. The private sector unions are dying. The days of job growth in government are over; a Democrat in the White House is promising to cut the federal work force by 12 percent, and mayors from New York to Los Angeles are slashing city payrolls. Republicans, the party of smaller government, cannot credibly follow Bositis's advice by trying to outbid the Democrats in providing jobs in government or quasi-governmental private sector jobs through the likes of Section 8 housing programs. But the GOP—and conservative Democrats—can appeal to younger African Americans who recognize that their opportunities will have to come from a vigorous market economy.

THE ECONOMIC AND MORAL ENERGY OF THE BLACK MALE IS ONE OF AMERICA'S GREATEST UNDEVELOPED RESOURCES. LIBERALISM HAS FAILED TO UNLEASH THIS ENERGY. IT IS TIME FOR CONSERVATISM TO TRY.

—ADAM MEYERSON

Responses to a few of Bositis's specific points: I had many sources for my observation that Senator Thad Cochran of Mississippi was unopposed for reelection in 1990 because of his strong support in the black as well as the white community; among them was the chairman of the Mississippi Democratic party. Yes, three out of five black voters are female, but the substantially higher black male support for Bush and Perot suggests a target of opportunity that most conservatives haven't thought of before. I believe that the economic and moral energy of the black male is one of America's greatest undeveloped resources. Liberalism has failed to unleash this energy. It is time for conservatism to try.

Contrary to Bositis, I did not offer a "casual and cavalier equation of religion and political conservatism" in my article. That would be absurd:

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the mainstream black church is the delivery arm of the welfare state and one of the most important get-out-the-vote forces in liberal Democratic politics. What I did say was that conservatives look to the church (and to entrepreneurship) rather than to government as the most effective institutions for building stronger families and neighborhoods and expanding economic opportunity for African Americans. This is already beginning to happen in communities across America.

I agree with Peter Signorelli's criticism of the GOP for failing to compete for the black vote, but otherwise I confess that I do not understand his letter. I'm not sure why he thinks I would have blacks move from the "liberal plantation" to the "conservative plantation." But if it's plantation conservatism to call for school vouchers, lower crime in black neighborhoods, a reinvigorated black (and white) family, and the entrepreneurial economy rather than government as the major avenue of advancement, I'll plead guilty to the charge.

Signorelli writes of the "onerous obstacles to wealth creation faced by the African-American community." Crime is one of those onerous obstacles. So is the destruction of the family; as David Murray suggested in his article on illegitimacy that was also in the spring edition of *Policy Review*, people without spouses have many fewer relatives to borrow from. And since the most important form of capital is human capital, one of the most onerous obstacles is the disgracefully low standards and expectations of most inner-city public schools. Addressing these crises is not a "pious platitude;" it is an aggressive, pragmatic, achievable way to multiply opportunity and bring the overwhelming majority of African Americans into the mainstream economy.

Turn 'em loose

Dear Sir:

Neither Victor Trevino nor I could describe a comprehensive crime control program in a single short article. But Trevino came close in his Spring 1994 *Policy Review* article describing his 200 "volunteer cops" in Houston's high-crime Precinct 6, where he is the elected constable.

Still, he skipped an essential part of the picture. Crime soared in Texas because, rather than spend the money to build prisons and meet standards imposed by federal Judge William Justice, Texas legislators in the 1980s chose a "turn 'em loose faster" policy. Convicts watched the proportion of their sentences they actually served drop from 55 percent to less than 15 by 1992 — only 51 days per year. To relieve crowding hundreds of prisoners deemed too dangerous to mix with the general inmate population were released early from solitary confinement directly onto city streets. In 1980 no Texas city ranked in the top 20 in the U.S. in property-crime rates. By 1988, 13 of the top 20 were in Texas (and Houston was not one of those). Texas's overall serious crime rate rose to second, below only Florida, another state whose legislators chose to speed the revolving door rather than raise taxes to alleviate prison crowding.

While adding 200 volunteer cops in Trevino's precinct in 1993 produced a 10 percent crime rate drop in his precinct, it seems he was only chasing the criminals across his precinct boundary.

Unless Texas builds the prisons to hold the parole violators Trevino's volunteers arrest, and follows his example in tracking down school truants, holding their parents to account, and providing adult mentoring in shambled-family neighborhoods such as his Little League program, crime will continue to rise.

CRIME SOARED IN TEXAS BECAUSE, RATHER THAN SPEND THE MONEY TO BUILD PRISONS AND MEET STANDARDS IMPOSED BY FEDERAL JUDGE WILLIAM JUSTICE, TEXAS LEGISLATORS IN THE 1980S CHOSE A "TURN 'EM LOOSE FASTER" POLICY.

—CHARLES R. BACON, JR.

Fifty years ago, Sheldon and Eleanor Gleuck showed us we can spot future criminals in the first grade with reasonable accuracy, at the very time when preventive efforts can still be effective. Until this nation acts on their insights, we will never have enough cops to make our streets and homes safe again.

Eugene H. Methvin
Reader's Digest
Washington, DC

Don't Wait For Help

Dear Sir:

During a spring when Washington's response to public concern over crime has been to posture about the "crime bill," it was encouraging to read of Constable Victor Trevino's work in Houston, Texas.

Constable Trevino has demonstrated an important new avenue for reducing crime and truancy—with no waiting for someone else to provide the resources and effort. For far too long, the only outlet we have given the poor, inner-city citizens fed up with crime on their streets, has been to walk the streets them-

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selves, at night, unarmed. Many are bravely doing just that, but in such dangerous circumstances this should not be the only option. Constable Trevino has shown how training and public spiritedness can produce results that no federal crime bill or new spending program can even pretend to approach.

I have been struck that poor citizens in our cities are expected to tolerate what middle class suburbanites would not—open-air drug markets, unsafe streets and playgrounds, and public schools that do not educate, where children are regularly victims of violent crime. Constable Trevino's work shows it doesn't have to be that way. Congratulations to the Heritage Foundation for bringing his work and the work of other Americans who are making their communities better places to the attention of a wider audience.

John P. Walters
New Citizenship Project
Washington, DC

Citizens' Duty

Dear Sir:

The article by Constable Victor Trevino in your Spring 1994 issue of *Policy Review*, "Zebra Territory," describing the effective use of citizen volunteers in Harris County (Houston), Texas, makes excellent reading.

The active participation of citizens in resisting the onslaught of crime that is plaguing every major city in the country is essential to our success in the reduction and control of criminal activity.

Constable Trevino has carved out some unique roles for his volunteer police officers, roles left untended by regular paid police officers because of other manpower priorities and budgetary constraints.

Although paid police officers are required to perform the professional and often dangerous responsibilities of fighting and solving crime, much of the ultimate responsibility must be borne by the average citizen.

The truest measure of a civilized society, it appears, is the willingness of its members to become involved in the hard and often dirty work of preserving itself against erosion and destruction.

We applaud Constable Trevino's efforts and wish him continued success.

Charles R. Bacon, Jr.
Deputy Chief of Police
Washington, DC

Volunteer Pressure

Dear Sir:

Regarding your article "Zebra Territory" by Victor Trevino, we support community policing and the coordinated efforts of civilians and police officers in a mutual effort to reduce crime. But, we are concerned about the safety and advisability of civilians performing police functions.

While Constable Trevino's statistics indicate that his plan is effective so far, that may be due to the work volunteers are doing with Little League, truancy, and other programs. There his volunteers are right on target. But to have volunteers perform police duties such as rounding up parole violators, who by their earlier convictions are felons, places volunteers at risk and increases the city's liability.

A volunteer force would better serve the city if they used their time and influence pressuring city officials to staff the police department and county and state officials to address the parole violations and prison overcrowding problems instead. No matter how many parole violators are sent back, if the prisons remain overcrowded, they'll be back on the streets soon enough and the long term solutions will continue to be ignored.

His volunteers can continue to serve as his "eyes and ears," but if the community and its leaders are serious about reducing crime, they should commit the resources necessary to field a paid, professional "Zebra Squad" as Constable Trevino calls his unit. Unfortunately, with 200 volunteers, the city officials have no incentive to go further.

Effective community policing programs address the core causes of criminality, using volunteers with a variety of professional and personal skills to assist in community, educational, and recreational programs coupled with a significant increase in police personnel trained to handle dangerous situations while interfacing with their communities.

TO HAVE VOLUNTEERS PERFORM POLICE DUTIES SUCH AS ROUNDING UP PAROLE VIOLATORS, WHO BY THEIR EARLIER CONVICTIONS ARE FELONS, PLACES VOLUNTEERS AT RISK AND INCREASES THE CITY'S LIABILITY.

—RICH ROBERTS

We hope that neither Constable Trevino nor his volunteers lose sight of why they are there. They are there because too many community leaders throughout the country have neither the will nor the incentive to address the problems and commit to their solution.

Rich Roberts
Public Information Officer
International Union of Police Associations
AFL-CIO
Alexandria, VA

No Quick Fixes

Dear Sir:

The article by Victor Trevino in the Spring issue of the *Policy Review* on voluntary cops presents an excellent proposal for an effective attempt to attack our crime problems at little or no cost to any branch of government. It surpasses just about anything that has emanated from academic pundits, and most certainly from any of the politically inspired quick-fix sponsors in our legislatures.

Not only does Trevino submit some very sound ideas; he also has successfully implemented them with

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a citizen volunteer program developed for one section of the city of Houston, Texas. It is a three pronged approach with the following specific objectives:

1. Tracking down violent criminal paroles who have violated their paroles, but were roaming the community's streets with impunity because of financial restraints on law enforcement agencies;

2. Encouraging and utilizing the active participation of well trained citizen volunteers who were authorized to function as regular uniformed police officers;

3. Seeking to nip in the bud the opportunities and inclinations of young persons to engage in criminal activities by placing controls, with parental participation, on school truancy, and by providing organized recreational activities, such as little league baseball, in parks and other areas that had been under the domination of gang members.

Victor Trevino reports some highly encouraging results with his program of three years. It deserves replication by many other communities.

Fred E. Inbau
Professor of Law Emeritus
Northwestern University
Chicago, Illinois

Spread the Zebras

Dear Sir:

Victor Trevino is right on target both in the use of volunteers and how he is using them. The liberal ideology that has dominated U.S. institutions in the last 30 years has produced two self-reinforcing phenomena.

First, the welfare state and its often amoral value system has created a breakdown in families on a massive scale. Consequently, products of these dysfunctional families demand more and more services and resources from government. Second, the cost of these very entitlement programs that helped produce this breakdown are soaking up available tax resources.

One way to cope with this dilemma is by the use of volunteers. Volunteers can provide much needed services without raising taxes. As an added benefit, volunteers inject more traditional community values into a government system often dominated by a liberal mindset.

The targets of Trevino's Zebra Squads are also well chosen. The Safe Streets Alliance's number one priority is to get violent criminals off the street. Point five of the Safe Streets 16 point plan to reduce violent crime specifically calls for locking up parole violators and point 13 encourages localities to enforce truancy laws. These are the same goals as Victor Trevino's Zebras.

As Safe Streets develops a network of chapters across the country, we plan to share your *Policy Review* piece with our chapter leaders so they can encourage their local police and sheriff's departments to adopt a similar program in their jurisdictions.

Again, thanks for spreading the word about this excellent crime-fighting program.

James Wootton
President
Safe Streets Alliance
Washington, DC

VOLUNTEERS CAN PROVIDE MUCH NEEDED SERVICES WITHOUT RAISING TAXES. AS AN ADDED BENEFIT, VOLUNTEERS INJECT MORE TRADITIONAL COMMUNITY VALUES INTO A GOVERNMENT SYSTEM OFTEN DOMINATED BY A LIBERAL MINDSET.

—JAMES WOOTTON

Fearsome Unions

Dear Sir:

The program encouraged by Victor Trevino in using his powers as a Constable in Precinct 6 of Harris County, Texas shows that we have common sense programs that would and could add to the need to have reserve police volunteers.

It is my opinion that with the growth of police unions that the civil defense, reserve or special police have been under attack, simply for fear of taking a job from union officers. This is the same fight that exists in volunteer fire fighters and full time union fire fighters.

Many departments have changed titles in police services to police aids. Some have hired private security to release full-time officers.

Constable Trevino shows that he is willing to take the risk of training volunteers in his community and returning to an era of American history where we are all pitched in to aid police.

At a time when it appears that some departments want to take over and exclude local police and volunteers it is refreshing to see the success of Constable Victor Trevino.

Gerald S. Arenberg
Executive Director
National Association of Chiefs of Police
Washington, DC

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"Me The Person"

Dear Sir:

Congressman Henry Hyde's article in your Spring 1994 Edition ("A Mom and Pop Manifesto, What the Pro-Family Movement Wants From Congress") is typical of much of conservative thought these days. Congressman Hyde seems to believe we need a new and large subsidy program for families, to go along with the host of subsidies that exist for almost every constituency.

One would think that 1964 to 1994 would have taught the congressman that any subsidy program brings with it intense government tinkering. Take a look at the 30 year history of the programs enacted in the 1960s: the war on poverty, Medicare, Medicaid, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, all are markedly different today than they were when originally enacted. All have failed to provide a better society, or remain even close to their estimated costs. The congressman's proposals seem no different. They will cost much and accomplish little.

The congressman refers to Charles Murray. The one believable item in Murray's book, *Losing Ground*, is his assertion that government gets an excess of whatever it subsidizes and much less of what it taxes. Hyde is right when he claims we subsidize the wrong things—we get more crime, more illegitimacy, more drug use, lower educational outcomes because of our subsidies. We get less work, less entrepreneurial activity, less venture capital, less creativity, because we tax these things. We have balkanized American society by playing one group off another, by granting a subsidy to any group making a loud noise. In doing so, leaders aggrandize themselves and government, while keeping the citizens from uniting on any set of issues.

GOVERNMENT CANNOT CREATE, IT CAN ONLY DESTROY. THE LESSONS OF WESTERN EUROPE AND THE FORMER USSR ARE OBVIOUS. THEIR FAILURES AND STRUGGLES ARE PROPORTIONAL TO THE IMPACTS OF THEIR GOVERNMENTS ON THEIR DAILY LIVES.

—BILL KELLY

The Declaration of Independence should be rewritten to begin "Me the person" instead of "We the people."

There is much longing for the "good old days." Those days saw a lower level of government subsidy for everyone. If a couple had a child, they were accountable for the well-being of that child. Oh sure, there were a few who attempted to place the burden of that child on the general public, but benefits were few and the stigma was great. That system worked well in those "good old days." It may be successful today as well. Children were raised by parents without the constant meddling and influence of government. A mom or a dad could correct a child without being accused by a host of bureaucrats of some form of abuse. The big change in America has been the expansion of government—and with that, the expansion of chaos.

Now a good conservative, Henry Hyde, wants another subsidy. He hasn't learned that government cannot be the solution, it can only be the problem. He forgets that government cannot create, it can only destroy. The lessons of Western Europe and the former USSR are obvious. Their failures and struggles are proportional to the impacts of their governments on their daily lives.

My solution—eliminate government entry into any activity not specifically designated in the Constitution or charter on which that government is based. That suggests that a city be limited to those functions outlined in the city charter, and the state or federal government be limited by the appropriate constitution. We can decide for ourselves how to train and raise children. Yes, we will be forced to accept some behavior we may find abusive, but we will have fewer drive-by shootings. Our children may come home from school with bruised behinds while SAT and ACT scores turn around and actually go up for a change. That's the way we lived in the "good old days" before we began a 30-year period of government tinkering.

Congressman Hyde and I agree heartily on one point, the need for traditional family values. We only disagree on the way we support those values. I believe individuals are key to family values and that government should simply stay away.

Bill Kelly
Manufacturers Representative
Northfield, MN

Dot Your Ides

Dear Sir:

Charles Adams' otherwise excellent article "Beware the Ides of April" in the Spring 1994 issue of *Policy Review* was marred by an error in the title. The Ides appeared in the ancient Roman calendar on the 13th of April (not the 15th) as well as the 13th of January, February, June, August, September, November, and December. It also occurs on the 15th of March, May, July, and October. Shakespeare had it right, of course, but then again he was not burdened by our educational system.

Karl M. Altenburger, M.D.
Ocala, FL

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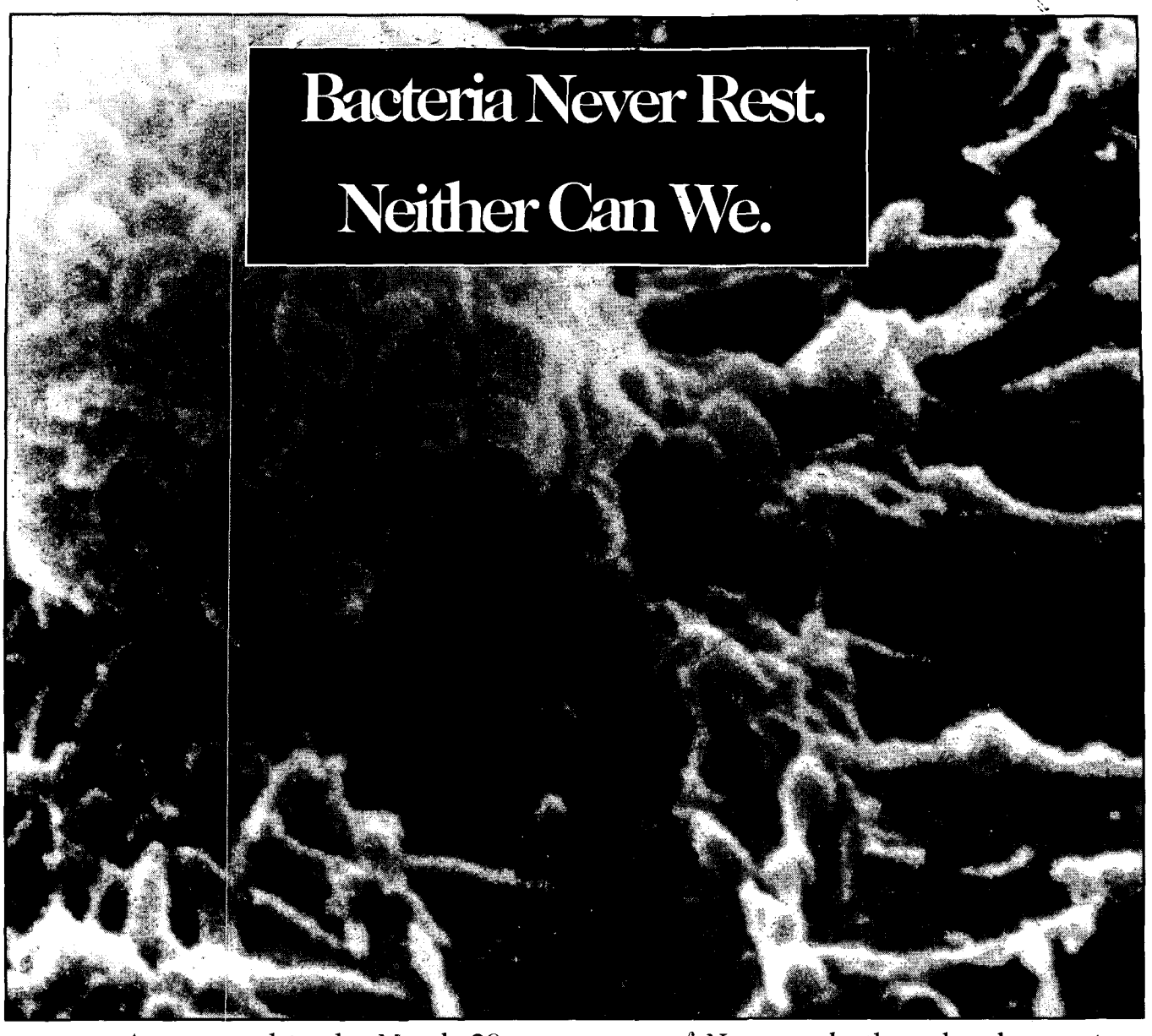

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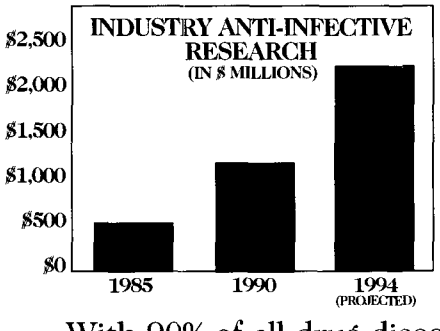

- Companies will spend $2.2 billion on anti-infectives research this year–16% of the industry's $13.8 billion R&D investment.
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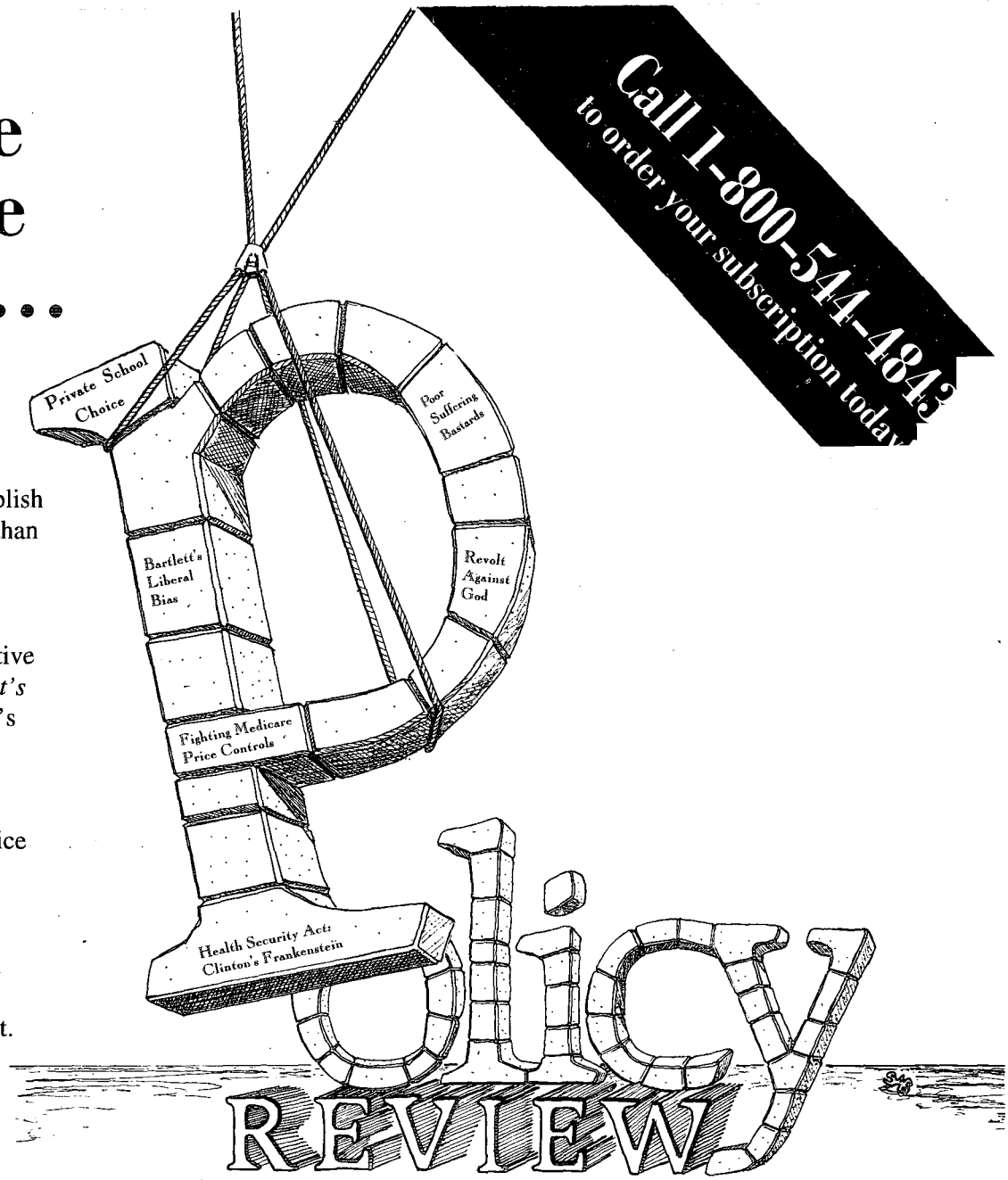

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policy REVIEW

After 12 years of Republican rhetoric promoting school vouchers, a Democrat—championed by the teachers' unions that regard private school choice as unmitigated evil—wins the White House.

In California, a voucher initiative goes down to defeat by a margin of more than two to one.

Ten years after vouchers moved to the center of the education debate, just one state has pushed through a pilot program, limited to one percent of the students in one city.

Have we heard death knell for private school choice?

Daniel McGroarty
Education's Long March:
The Choice Revolution Shifts to the States

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